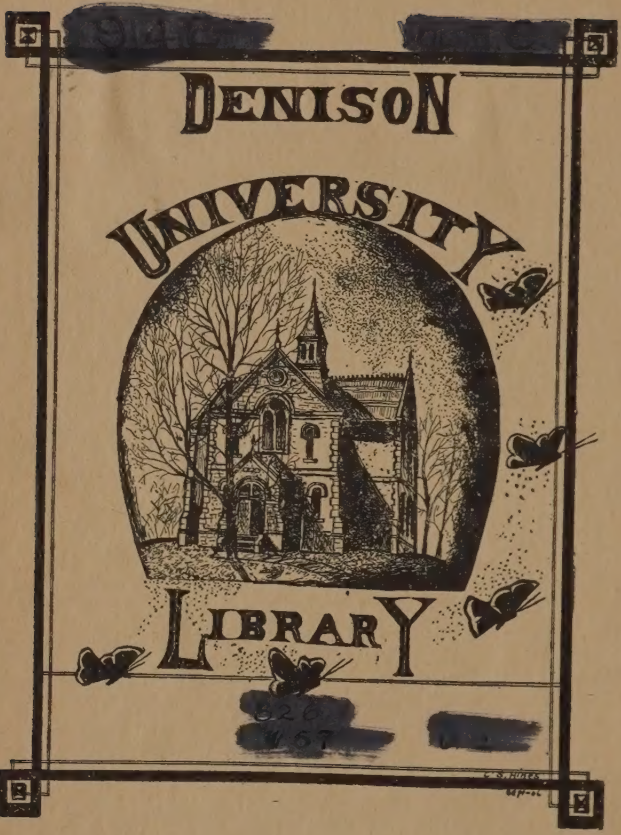

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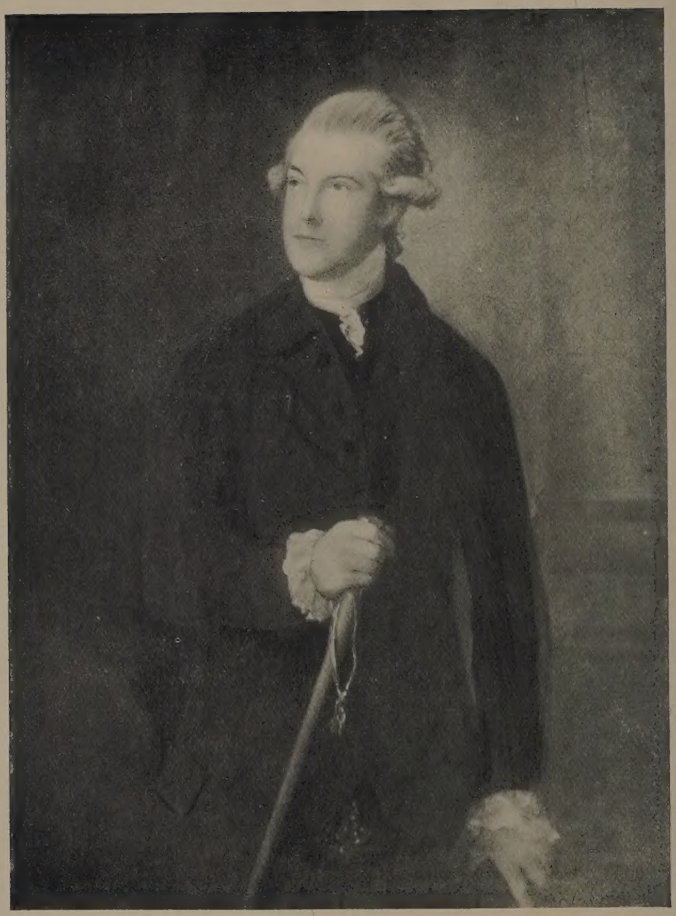
CHRONICLES OF ERTHIG ON THE DYKE



PHILIP YORKE
By Gainsborough

CHRONICLES OF ERTHIG ON THE DYKE

BY ALBINIA LUCY CUST

(MRS. WHERRY)

IN TWO VOLUMES WITH THIRTY-THREE ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. II

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I

He will not hear the north wind rave
Nor moaning, household shelter crave,
From winter's rains that beat his grave.
High up the vapours fold and swim,
About him breeds the twilight dim,
The place he knew forgetteth him.

THE old Squire had gone to his long home, and his son and successor had but little leisure at that time for country pursuits. But Dorothy Yorke, devoted wife and loving mother, held the reins of govern-

ment in firm but gentle hands, effectually assisted by faithful Tom Birch. Unlike her mother, who grew stout for want of exercise, Dorothy, in spite of ill health, took a great deal of exercise on horseback and on foot, personally superintending the works that were going on for the improvement of the property, for the old steward John Caesar was getting past work and worried himself exceedingly over the increased expenses of the estate. Dorothy, while acting as regent for her absent son, constantly made "little flights" to Chester for society, to Bath for health, and during the years 1768–69 wrote to him often and at great length.

With her, during these temporary absences, besides her daughter Anne, went certain members of her household, Betty Bevan, John and Boy, besides the two Ratcliffes, aunt and niece, the younger, "Betty the little" training up as genteel companion to the ladies of Erthig.

Before however undertaking a Bath journey with Dorothy and her suite, it is necessary in the first instance, to follow the fortunes of her son, keeping at this time his terms at Lincoln's Inn.

Philip is no new acquaintance. Unlike Edisbury, Meller, and Simon Yorke, who were in middle life when they made their bow upon the Erthig scene, he was born there, and it was always his home.

Beneath the classic shades of Parnassus, Philip had made many friends, and among them and united to him in closest affection was Brownlowe, son of Sir John Cust. Sir John had a sincere regard for Philip, and when the

latter fell in love with his daughter Elizabeth, offered no real obstacle to their union, stipulating only, that their joint income should be adequate to their position. Philip fretted continually at the necessary delay, while Brownlowe spared no pains to encourage and sympathize. The story unfolds itself in the earliest of their letters, and nothing is more striking than the good breeding and good feeling which distinguish the actors in the little romance. The second letter gives a charming account of an informal dance with its impromptu supper unexpectedly provided by thoughtful Sir John; it also introduces Jacob Reynardson who afterwards married Elizabeth's elder sister Anne; Mr. Edwards was an Erthig neighbour, and is perhaps the person so often referred to as "our contemporary"; "Tom Birch" needs no introduction, nor yet Mr. Lawry, whose admiration of Nature finds expression both in prose and verse.

BROWNLOWE CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Belton,
"*September* 2, 1767.

"DEAR PHILIP,

"My Father is now in possession of the secret, when I inform'd him of it, he discover'd to me all that singular goodness and affection, which, whenever he discourses upon the Welfare of his Children, so transcendently appears. I find him possess'd of such an high opinion and esteem of you, that honors and great fortunes will be infinitely inferior in his value to you with a competency, and the consent and approbation of your friends; the former, all must allow is extremely material, and the latter I find, is in his opinion, of great con-

sequence. He instantly asked me, Do Mrs Yorke and Mr Hutton approve of this ? And when I hinted to him Mr H's disapprobation of your marrying, it struck him very much. He has been taught from his infancy so much to dread divisions in a family, that he wou'd fear very much for his daughter marrying into one that was divided. And as to fortune he apprehends there wou'd scarcely be a sufficiency between you. He will give my Sister five thousand pounds upon her Marriage, and will add the other five upon my grandmother's death, or my marriage, whichever happens first. The interest of £5000 is £200 per annum, and I doubt the utmost that you cou'd add to that wou'd not make your income £1000 per annum, for less than which you cou'd not live comfortably ; my father says you ought to have £1300 or £1400 per annum ; and with that, and the approbation of Mrs Yorke and your Uncle, he has such a very high opinion of you, that he wou'd rather marry his daughter to you than to a man with fortunes and honors five times as great ; but this is provided his daughter's inclinations lead the same way, for those he will in the first place consult and attend to. Besides this, he thinks my sister too young to marry, and wou'd rather she sho'd continue single two years to come. He is against the things being mention'd to my sister as matters are at present circumstanc'd. The hurry I am in from having company in the house, and visits to return to our neighbours, obliged me to defer writing till today, and now I expect a summons every minnit to set forwards post after a pudding, and therefore I must make this letter much shorter than I shoud make it by inclination. But I must first tell you that I am upon the whole very well satisfied on your account with the conversation I had yesterday with my father, the purport of which you have in the former part of this ; for the obstructions which he forsees I hope and believe may be removed ; your Uncle,

I hope, may return to his wonted affectionate disposition towards you, and his approbation will plainly see, take away the greatest difficulty with my father; for solid lasting happiness is what he seeks for my sister, and not grandeur and great riches, such happiness as she may always find with a husband of your disposition, and your connections, the latter is of no small consideration with him, any more than with me. I shall write more to you if I can by the next post, and therefore I regret the less, the hasty conclusion of this. Did you burn my last letter?

"My best compliments to those who do me the favour of enquiring after me, dear Philip,

"Your very sincere and affectionate friend,

"BROWNLOWE CUST."

"Belton,

"*September 11th*, 1767.

"DEAR PHILIP,

"The Levy preceeding last night's assembly prevented my writing to you by last night's post and therefore I thought I shou'd shake hands with you before you saw any more of my hand writing, but Preston going to Town by the *fugitive* to-morrow he can put this into the post for me, so that you will have it on Tuesday morning which is earlier than you can set out for Buxton as you will find by a letter which I wrote last Tuesday to you that I cannot be there before Thursday noon next. You may by this means have a little account of the assembly before you see me, and may know who was a certain lady's partner: Jacob Reynardson danc'd with her, besides whom and myself there being three gentlemen from Belton we made a very good set of dancers, and a very chearful and long dance we had, for we did not break up till between four and five this morning, and then my father surprised us all extremely by a cold supper

which he had prepared for us quite unknown to us ; that detain'd us an hour longer, so that it was very near six before we got home ; and some of our neighbours had much farther to go, nay one family had an airing of ten miles to take after that. It was universally agreed that *Queen Anne** had open'd her reign better than had been known for some years ; fox-hunting not being begun at this time of the year there is seldom above five or six young men, but it was far otherwise last night, for we made up thirteen couples, males and females *as they went into the Ark*. This business being over I am tether'd but by one string more, and that is the Turtle feast to our worthy friends at Grantham (who always make very honorable mention of you) next Monday ; so that on Wednesday morning I am off westward, and laying at Derby that night I hope to reach Hodson's house at Buxton before the dinner bell rings on Thursday : I have wrote to my friends, already there, to secure us beds at that house if possible. Thanks to you and to J. Edwards for your letters this morning from Glynn : we have so much to say that I think it is high time that the Trio shou'd again meet. I want very much to remonstrate with you against low spirits ; and dont answer me by saying that I dont know what it is to be in Love, when I tell you that I see no reason for them ; for I know very well that you will scarce ever hear of a match taking place without very great rubs while it is depending ; now what are the rubs in your case ? An Uncle averse to it,

* This may possibly refer to his sister Anne.

It is quite difficult to disentangle the number of Cust connections whose names are introduced in Brownlowe's letters. "Old Lady Cust" was Anne, Sir Richard's widow ; Lady Cust, the wife of Sir John ; Peregrine was a brother, Dolly a sister of Sir John ; Jane, whose second husband was Mr. James Evelyn of Felbridge, was also his sister ; and Mr. Vernon was the husband of Lady Cust's sister, Elizabeth Payne ; Mr. Casamajor, familiarly known as Cass, was an intimate friend of both Brownlowe and Philip.

but he has so little reason to be averse to it, that there is great probability that he will not long continue to be so, and as to your nearest relation, there is great reason to think that she will give her entire consent and aprobation : and I hope before this that you have made her acquainted with your heart and it's wishes. Then as to *rivals* there is at present no danger from them, all that is now removed for some time, long enough to give you a very considerable advantage over the only one that has appear'd. So, in short, there is no foundation for any low spirits : I expect therefore to meet you in very good ones, and hope that your health will be as good ; take care of that, I beg and beseech you, and fatigue neither your mind nor your body, in your journey to Buxton. A child is expected at Denton every moment, the midwife has been with Mrs Welby ever since last Tuesday morning and a physician being sent for yesterday gave us great concern ; so that my Father wrote to Mr. Welby senior this morning, an answer I find is come, but he not being at home I do not yet know it's contents ; but I am in great hopes it will inform us that she is in her Mothers phrase, a little *pether* now. My best respects and compliments to Mrs Yorke and your sister, and remember me to T. Birch and J. Edwards, and believe me to be,

" My dear Philip,

" Your most affectionate and sincere friend,

" Brownlowe Cust.

" The contents of Mr. Welby's letter informs us that poor Mrs. Welby Junior was deliver'd this morning of a dead child, but is as well as can be expected."

" Belton,

" *October the 25th*, 1767.

" Dear Philip,

" Tho' my uncle Pere is here and has brought Dr Kelly with him for a day or two only, I will not dis-

apoint you of a letter by this post, nay indeed I have made Pere the means of my writing still more frequently to you for I have made half a dozen covers directed to you, that every now and then when I am drove to write by candle light I may send you a letter without my father's being apprised of my sending over to Grantham when it is dark and consequently of my idleness in postponing my writing till so late. We have a noble house full here almost wholy of our own family, for my Grandmother and Miss Dolly are come to stay with us as long as we can keep Pere; but that we cannot do beyond next Tuesday. We had a very good meeting with much mirth and harmony at the Alderman's choice, and yesterday I went over to pay my first visit to Mr. Alderman, and finding an exceeding good cold collation, I set down with him and eat heartily, and afterwards drank two half pint bumpers one of ale to the present Members, the other in Brandy and water to the Corporation of Grantham. Stanser told me yesterday morning an anecdote which I tell you because I think you will like it, which was that one of the Corporation (one of the two who are to us black sheep) went away from the old Alderman's supper to a publick house, where he said 'I am come away from the supper because there are none there but *Custs*.' For the very same reason old Stanser staid and would have staid 'till almost this time, singing and hurraing, wig in hand. Scamardine coming over yesterday to treat Dr Kelly with some solos on the bassoon, we made up afterwards a little dance of half a dozen couple, to be sure not altogether as they went into the Ark, but you wont like it the less I think when you hear that all the gentlemen were of the name of *Cust*. This same post which has brought me the pleasure of a letter from you, has brought me one also from Casamajor: not upbraiding you for not answering his letter, but apprehending he had not directed it right and that it

had miscarried, he writes by means of me to you to request you to lend him your rooms in Serle Street for a little time, while he is in search for Chambers, as he resolves to be an *in patient* if possible of one of the Inns of Court. As he cannot have your answer before the commencement of the term, I, knowing that you are not likely to want your lodgings just yet, will write to Carpue to know if they are not preengaged to some other friends to whom you may have offer'd them, and if they are not, I will desire him to keep them for Cass. and I design to write to Cass by this post. You will receive this next Friday. Be so good therefore as to write to Carpue by Saturday morning's post, with orders to keep the rooms for Cass : and if you write a short scratch to Cass himself by the same post, telling him what you have done about Carpue, and direct it to him enclosed to Charles Gore, Esq. at Tring in Hertfordshire it will go free and may possibly reach him just before he leaves that place : in my letter to him I will make your apologies for not answering his letter. Your letter to-day, my dear friend, was a very satisfactory one. I see with great pleasure that Vernon's plan gives you a very comfortable patrimony, and I dont doubt but you will strictly adhere to it, and be very well able to realize it ; you must as you very properly observe be first of all just to yourself, and if afterwards your fortunes shou'd increase, and you shou'd be enabled to be generous, I am very sure you will always have a disposition to be so : . . ."

" Downing Street,
" *November 6th*, 1767, *Friday night.*

" Dear Philip,

" As I go tomorrow morning to Mrs Evelyn's I have only time to write a few lines to you to-night to go by to-morrow's post. My father brought two letters from you from Belton with him, and this day's post

brought me another, all which I read with great pleasure, and am very happy to write to you in return : and I wish as I sent away a hasty scrall last night from Edwards's that I had more time for a letter by this post.

" The torrent of lawyers to town was so great yesterday that at three o'clock in the afternoon my father and mother cou'd not get one post-horse at Barnet to bring them to town, and that was the only reason for their not coming last night ; however they got here this morning in very good health and the coach arrived a very few hours after them : you will be glad, I am sure, to hear that all the family are transported hither in good health : Miss Folkes is still with us, but that will not be an obstacle to me in the disburthening myself of the great secret, which I hope to do very soon after my return from Felbridge. I shall be back next Sunday, and ready to receive letters from you by next Monday's post. I know the state of anxiety you must be in, and most heartily wish it may very soon be in my power to relieve you, but as I wou'd not have you depend solely upon my endeavours, I repeat my advice to you to come up the latter end of this month ; as my father knows nothing of this advice of mine, I need not repeat to you my request to keep it perfectly secret, for you must very plainly see the necessity of it's being quite between you and me : my father wou'd I daresay object to my advising you to come to town, thinking that after Christmas wou'd be quite time enough, but I think very differently and foresee that many things may happen very disconcerting between this and next January or February, besides that, it wou'd be keeping your mind terribly upon the stretch for so much longer a time. Dont you in any of your letters to me say anything about following this advice of mine, for if I shou'd be under a necessity of shewing the letter you wou'd bring me into a scrape ; but mention your coming to town as a resolution of your own for any

reasons you think proper to give. I see that it is very right for you to come about the latter end of this month (not sooner) : and to bring with you the new rental of your estate to lay formally before my father and to talk over your plan with him. He will then, I flatter myself, approve of your endeavouring to convince my sister of your attachment to her, and while you are either in Wales or Lincolnshire at Christmas she will be very cleaverly disengaged for the free consideration of it : and this I have chalked out in my mind as the method that will be most agreable to her. You will very probably be desirous of going into Wales at Christmas, either to wait upon Mrs Yorke to town or to settle some of your affairs, otherwise your company will be truly acceptable to me at Belton, where I shall go and keep house (a *Gander* party) for three or four weeks at that time. I thank you for your kind present of game, I shall take care to leave directions about it before I go to-morrow ; but I desire you will not send so much as to seem as if you fleec'd your own house, for in such case I must not admit it within this. I have taken due care of your letters to Lawry, and put them into the penny-post.

" The best respects of all this family wait upon your's and I am, My dear Philip,

" Your sincere and most affectionate friend,

" Brownlowe Cust.

" My best compliments to T. Birch."

" Downing Street,

" *November* 10*th*, 1767.

" My dear friend,

" I was very sorry to find by your letter of yesterday that you was disapointed of a letter from me by last Friday's post, but I hope that before this time you have discover'd that the post and not I was the cause of it ; for I wrote to you from Cambridge yesterday

sen'night, and that letter ought to have reach'd you on Friday morning. You will feel strangely I daresay when I inform you that before you receive this a certain person will know the purport of all your letters to me; Nancy has undertaken to seize the first opportunity of acquainting her with it: expect not to hear from me how she receives the intelligence, but come yourself at the time I mention'd and learn. My father did not object to it's being mention'd to her now, upon my undertaking for you that, shou'd it prove successful, you wou'd not be in a hurry to conclude it, for he sais he cannot think that there is a sufficient overplus of your income above your expences to allow for the unavoidable accidents of expence: and therefore he desires that some money may be saved and laid by for that purpose, which there may be, if you live single for any time. As I know your disposition and your fears, I ventured to engage for you, that you wou'd very contentedly wait if he wou'd but consent to your making your addresses to her now, and by that, get the start of any one else: and I think you will very readily ratify what I have promised for you. Cass and I had a great deal of talk about you within those very walls that were conscious of the conversations of the trio, I mean your lodgings; where he is fix'd but for a little time for he means to take others, that yours may be ready for you as soon as ever you choose: he cannot ween himself all at once from Quadrille and the other end of the town, and I having promised to make one at his mother's this evening have only time to add my best compliments to Mrs Yorke and your sister and to subscribe myself,

"Dear Philip,

"Your sincere and most affectionate friend,

"Brownlowe Cust.

"My best compliments to T. Birch."

"Downing Street,
"*November 26th*, 1767.

"My dear Philip,

"I freely own to you your letters give me great and real pleasure, for I can not too often hear your professions of sincere love and true attachment to one for whom I have a most tender affection, and for whose happiness I am most earnestly solicitous, and I very sincerely wish it was in my power to give you as much pleasure by my letters: however since I believe it will be a disapointment to you not to receive a letter from me by to-night's post, tho' I did write by the two last, I set down in haste to scrall at you. I own to you also that I am very glad you are resolved to come up, not that I have any reason to give you the least hopes of success from it, but that now this affair is advanced to such a critical period that my situation is too nice a one, and too embarrassing for me to write much upon the business: and besides if the determination shoul'd be what is but too probable at present, I shou'd be much better satisfied to be with you than for you to be at 180 miles distance. At all events I am extremely glad you are coming to town, and you may depend upon seeing me the very evening of your arrival if you do but reach London two hours before midnight; indeed I hope you will be at Carpue's by five o'clock, for there has not been very lately a robbery upon Finchley common, and therefore I think its scarcely safe to venture over that in the dusk. Your lodgings will be ready for you, for Cass has been confin'd for this last week or ten days to his mother's house with a fever, which however he has now nearly recover'd from. Your neighbour Lloyd Junior and I got into the house of peers together the first day of the sessions; I believe he dines with me next Sunday. You will not forget one Sunday I am sure that you dined here; I design ever to retain the specimen you then gave

me of your hand writing. Having another letter to write to-night I am obliged to make this shorter than I design'd which as it is likely to be the last I shall write to you of some time I fully intended to have made much longer; but now I must with my best compliments to all at Erthig and best wishes for your good journey conclude and subscribe myself, my dear Philip,

"Your sincere and most affectionate friend,

"Brownlowe Cust."

John Lawry *to* Philip Yorke

"Lea,

"*Nov.* 16, 1767.

"Dear Sir,

"I am much obliged to my Aunt and you for your invitation to Fanny; there are no Freends I should be better pleased to have her with, than my Aunt and Miss Yorke; But She is not yet returned from Bath, so that I doubt whether she will be up in time for me to send her under the care of my Friend Mr Lloyd of Plas power. You direct me in your poscript to buy for you a quantity of Chocolate from the usual place, and send it down as soon as convenient. I hope for some instructions more explicit in the Letter you promised me, and I will obey them accordingly.

"Since I wrote last to you the great Brown* hath appeared among us, to correct, amend and inlarge the garden of our Worshipful Bart Sir Sam Fludget and Sir Gregory Page who delighted as our friend Mr Lloyd to see works going forward hath been called into the Council; and they have at last by lengthening their fosses much beyond the first plan; been able to enclose

* Lancelot Brown, generally called Capability Brown from his frequent use of that word. He rose by his merit from a low condition to be head gardiner at Stowe and was afterwards appointed by George II to the same position at Hampton Court.

one fine spreading Oak which is an unique, and the glory and pride of the whole Neighbourhood, so great a rarity is an Oak in this *Citizen Land*. It is a very vulgar proverb 'the *more Cooks* the *worse broth*' and it cannot possibly be applicable where such great men are the Cooks; but from the ingredients they have to use, it will turn out I believe, notwithstanding all their skill, but a *soupe maigre*, in comparison with those works, where the liberal hand of Nature hath afforded great material in a large compass to work upon.—

"Where hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,
Where earth and water, seem to strive again;
Not Chaos-like together crushed and bruis'd
But as the World harmoniously confus'd.

"You have communicated to me a surprising discovery in your last letter, that *when you are pressed in time you write most dreadfully*. It may seem new to you who are a young gentleman but I who am twice your age can tell you there is nothing new under the Sun; and that I made the same discovery in myself before you was born.

"I am, sir, your most *affectionate cozen* (though not worthy to be *your Counsellor* where a Brown is required)

"JOHN LAWRY."

Mr. Birch's letters though important in the history of Erthig, are of little general interest; but his allusion to the temporary aberrations of Jack Edwards is fitly followed by that gentleman's announcement of his own marriage.

From THOMAS BIRCH *to* PHILIP YORKE

"DEAR PHIL,

"Your Mother received yours of Today, with the note enclosed duly to hand. With regard to your

Scheme for making a Cut in the Meadow, and moving the Mill, we want to know whether you are determined to put it in execution or no, for we have carried a few Stones to the River by the Woodhouse, and if you are determined we will carry more, and prepare bricks for building the Mill-house, etc., as if it is to be done, the sooner it is set about the better, since the Baron will not most certainly approve of the Cut through his Ground for a continuance. Mr Caesar has considered and calculated the scheme a good deal; he says it will cost you near a thousand pounds to complete it, and as he thinks the Mill may be improved, the Grounds drained, and every thing (but the fine piece of water and the Mill-race may, as time and opportunity offer, be made such) be done with equal advantage and indeed with equal beauty by a much less costly scheme; It is as follows, To put the Dam at the conflux of the Rivers to carry a surf from thence into the present Mill-pool, which we know is practicable, to carry the Mill-race from the *French Mill to the Kings' Mill Cut, in a strait line nearly, through the Willow Ground in Coed-y-Glyn, the way Caesar formerly mentioned, which will drain the Boggy land and will be a fence to make the Meadow in Two Peices, provided you widen the Ditch from the Mills to the River, and put a Path at the Bottom (as you did intend,) to put the Mill upon the new construction and turn the wheel towards the High Walk in the Woods, and Rough cast the Mill-house, To clump the Miller's House and Barne, and indeed if you like it better, than rough casting, the Mill house too, to destroy the present road to the Mill each way entirely. A new Road to the Mill from the Avenue to commence just on this side the Sand-gate at Bron-bootle and run along the bottom of the Coed-y-Glyn Wood, till it comes to the Hedge which

* French, said to be a corruption of Frank or Free mill, as distinguished from the King's mill.

goes from that Wood to the Miller's Barn, and then to turn and run alongside that to the Mill; it is absolutely necessary to have a road that way, for a great many customers come from Velin-puleston and elsewhere, so many that Mr Caesar thinks if the Mill is moved, it will lose a great deal; The gate leading from the Sontley Road to be moved partly to where the stile is now, and the Road to come under the wood till it meets the other at the above-mentioned Hedge; (That Hedge may always remain, for when the Clump is placed properly it will not be seen :) There will be a gate through the Hedge and a wicket, the gate to be kept locked so that no carts can go, and only Horse-loads through the wicket, whenever the walk is made in Coed-y-Glyn; I know you will see both the Road and the Hedge, but if it will be any Eye-sore at all it will be but trifling under such restrictions. Mr Caesar thinks that this whole scheme can be completed for about three Hundred Pounds at most, and for fifty more the old Rivers can be filled up by sloping the banks of the present Streams, which will make all that land worth 30s an acre at least, and the Mill worth £50 a year at least also.

" Upon Mature consideration I am entirely of Caesar's opinion : a Thousand Pounds is a great deal of money, and if you are flush of money any Time and chuse a Peicewater widening, and a Fall also in the Mill race it may be made. Caesar seems anxious to know your determination, for the Baron is so odd a man that he is afraid of having complaints from him every day; and it is therefore necessary to pursue the one or the other scheme with vigour. If you chuse Caesar's scheme we shall carry the River in a direct line and so gain some ground between the Wood-house and it.

" Poor old Simpson is dead, so there is a brisk widow for a lively young fellow of mettle. You are quite right in your course, Make yourself more familiar with Miss E,

and be happy. I am glad you are pleased with the verdict your Mother and I gave against Roberts, and that you are resolved, if necessary, to confirm it. The Ladies join in love and best wishes to you, and with yours most sincerely and affectionately,

"THOMAS BIRCH.

"A speedy answer is desired."

"*Saturday, February 27th*, 1768.

"MY DEAR PHIL,

"I intended to have wrote to you a Post or two ago, but several things of the completion of which I wanted to inform you were not completed time enough. Puleston does not care for the Exchange neither does he chuse to grant a Lease for a very long Term of years; but, (as Caesar thinks, you had better become his Tenant, were it only for seven years for he justly says many things may happen in that Time,) I have laboured the point by talking with him, by notes &ct. till I have at last got a Note which Caesar and I deem satisfactory, in which he says I may rest assured that no one but the Squire of Erthig shall be his Tenant. I have not specified the terms of years, for he chuses to talk with you about it, and perhaps you may get 14 or 21 years; Caesar, if it should be only for seven, would have you, as soon as the Lease is signed, begin to new settle your own Kings Mill, as you may get at least half as much more Rent for it; You will find Puleston's note among a Bundle of Papers which I shall leave for you, all of which I would have you look over; we know that Stearndale has notice to quit, therefore you have nothing to do but to wait upon Puleston with Caesar sometime about Lady Day when his Agent Mr. Parry will be over, for then you will be able to agree upon the Lease.

"Your Wood house is now quite secure, I will now venture to pronounce it so, though I was before pre-

mature, for so violent have been the Floods that they took away a vast deal of Ground and were going quite round the House, indeed the men, were called from finishing that work, to Bryn Golan Dam, which was very near going away. I therefore consulted with Caesar how to render that Dam unnecessary (which I heard him say was practicable) and accordingly we got some men to dig a cut at 1s 6d pr. rood which is now finished and answers the purpose, the whole amounts to about 40s and you are rid of a constant yearly expense and a deal of labour in the worst sort of weather. The same men have undertaken to dig two cuts in the Coed y Glyn meadows and on Monday they begin, these cuts are absolutely necessary for much of the Heart of the Meadows is gone and more going every flood. One of the Cuts will be through Stearndale's Ground, and we have made really a fair agrement with him, to give him a piece of ground in quality and quantity equal. Oldfield offered £26 pr ann. for these meadows, they are so much damaged since then that no one will give so much now (Vernon asked 30 pr ann for them. I hope, these cuts are completed and the old bed of the River pecked down, they will be worth £40 per annum at least and all for an expense in comparison trifling; The other cut goes through the Kings Mill Land and Caesar has agreed about that, the River will by this means run strait and therefore be incapable of further mischief. Your plantation is completed, all the Trees transplanted and a vast many added to them. I hope you will like it, we all admire it. Caesar has ordered the Marked Firs to be stocked up, the Ditch to be filled; we have resolved to plow and sow all the Lawn in that Barn field immediately. Your Mother, Caesar and I have rid you of another Constant Expense, that is of carrying the Liquor at every Brewing. We have taken up the Pipe mended it and laid it again, in such a manner that it carrys the Liquor into the

Vault, Ale Seller and small Beer Seller, we likewise new laid the Cooler and all this is only at some expense in Workmanship, as not an Inch of Lead is purchased. We all go to Chester on Fryday next. Your Mother desires therefore, that Chronicles succeeding that Post, to be directed to her at Mrs. Wilbraham's (Relict of the late Brewer whose house she has taken) in Pepper Street, Chester, for she will like the Perusal of them and they will otherwise probably be lost. As you have money by you, Caesar will be glad if you will send him Sixty Pounds. Caesar's fears are confirmed for not only the Baron but Cap. Jones have begun to complain. As for Jack Edwards, you might as well have flung your Plan into the sea as given it to him for he is so busy courting Plas Madoc that he minds nothing else. I have heard from him sometime since desiring me to be your substitute or Groomsman and informing me he should set out as last Tuesday Sennight and would let me know when he arrived. Report says he is arrived but I do not hear from him. Samuel Gilder goes on vastly well and the Home is much quieter and better without such Boors in it. All the country has raised labourers wages, consequently yours begin to complain, Caesar says you must give them a Penny a day more, and I fancy has talked with them on that Head. Mr. Simpson's death has made George and his wife impatient to inhabit Plas Gronow, Servants are in it and it is mostly done excepting the Rough-cast, which will be done in March. George complains that he has spent more than three years rent already exclusive of the Paper. I believe you intended to exclude the workmenship bestowed the —— &ct from that Sum, he hopes you will not insist upon repaying to Caesar, the money, he has payed for a part of the sawing &ct. which in strictness belongs to him. I said I was sure you would do anything in Reason. I suppose it is about £3 you must not dispute about it. I have, in

some measure at your Mother's instance, agreed that you shall pay for putting up some of the old wainscoat—high up the staircase; as the wainscoat would be otherwise useless and papered staircases soon wears greasy. Warrington did not chuse to be at the Expense of it. Do write me a letter and let me know if you approve of James Rogers annuity of 40s and whether you are likely to meet with success in your negociations. A letter will find me at Lloyds on Sunday the 7th of March but not long after. The ladies join me in love to you.

"Your affectionate

"THOMAS BIRCH."

From MR. JOHN EDWARDS

"Glyn, near Oswestry, Salop,

"*March* 8, 1768.

"DEAR SIR,

"I take the first opportunity to inform you that Miss Lloyd honoured me with her hand yesterday morning at Oswestry in Shropshire, the town where she lived. We arrived at my Father's by Dinner, attended by Tom Birch, Yorke's friend, and my sister who were our seconds, and excepting Mr Wymondsold, I may pronounce myself the happiest man in the kingdom.

"I have heard nothing from poor Philip since I saw you, nor has Birch had a line from his swain. I hope he will come to some resolutions before he quits London, which I believe is the wish of his Mother, and all his true friends.

"I hope to see London for a few days long before you go to Berkshire. My respectful compliments to the Ladies.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your most respectful humble servant

"JOHN EDWARDS."

DOROTHY YORKE *to her son*

"Chester,
"*March* 9, 1768.

"MY DEAR,

"I came to this place on Friday. I find myself fluttered by this little remove. We left Mr. Birch that morning at Erthig waiting for our Post which never now comes to Wrexham till Noon or Evening instead of the Mornings. Mr. Lloyd Plass Powr says he will inquire the reason; I am often thinking how miserable it will make you. Mr. Birch was to go towards the wedding folks at Glynn as I believe yesterday they was marryd, he has been such an assiduous lover that he would not bestow a thought or look on an old acquaintance. You are very good in writing to me. I do not pretend to give advice but wonder at your patience, to remain all this time in an uncertainty is your own fault. I hope My Dear, You will not expect me to return so soon as you Mention to Erthig for the Assises is what I came here to avoid. I have got a very comfortable house with one very good spare bed to which you will be most heartily welcome and when you like a ride home; you will find every thing in order for your reception letting me know a little before. Ann seems pleased with the oppertunity of going to dance and following her Spinet more Closely, as to my own part shall be more at home than abroad, not attending any assemblys. I can have Chat enough without; 20 fiddling visits while I am writing this. . . . Your six barrels of oysters set out to-night by the Fly."

Straws, they say, show which way the wind blows, and Lady Cust and her daughters, in spite of their formal expressions, were evidently well disposed to their late guest.

"Lady Cust and Miss Custs return their compliments to Mr Philip Yorke they are much obliged to him, for

the favour of his enquiries; they had a very good Journey, and had the pleasure, and satisfaction of finding Mr and Mrs Vernon very well, who beg to add their compliments to Mr Yorke and join Lady Cust, in many thanks, for his bountifull present of salmon and lobsters which are extremely fine. Lady Cust thinks herself much obliged to Mr Yorke for the most pleasing account of Mrs Cust; she with Miss Custs beg to wish him a pleasant journey into Wales, where they hope he will have the pleasure of finding Mrs and Miss Yorke perfectly well; they have no other commands, than to request the favour of him, to make their best compliments acceptable to his Family.

"Thurlowe.

"*March* 7, 1768."

From the elegant philosophizing of Mr. Lawry to the vigorous colloquial style of Philip is a drop from the heights; but while Lawry was discoursing on matters of small importance, and played with words, Philip with his whole future happiness trembling in the balance, wrote as if in earnest conversation with his prospective father-in-law Sir John Cust.

"Grantham,

"*Feb.* 3, 1768.

"Dear Sir,

"I am always happy to revisit this place; for I must rejoice and make one in that unanimous regard which every Individual here pays to your Family and Interests: You are so totally the Servant of the Publick that even your Family must lament the multiplicity of your Vocations; I can therefore Sir! I have very little claim upon any moment of your time, which I should not now have encroached upon but from the consequence of the subject and from an Idea that you have at present

more leisure than usual to attend to private concerns. I spent two days at Newnham not (I think) unprofitably, I say so, as I am now totally delivered from all apprehensions of my Uncle's displeasure being raised to that pitch, as to dispose of his Estate (in case of failure of Issue contrary to his former intention and declaration: I think it proper to open this much to you Sir! as your Humanity and good-will might have fear'd for my Interests, and have suspected any early accident in one Quarter very dangerous to the enlargement of my Fortunes: I shall endeavour to recall and to trouble you with the heads of a Conversation, which employed the larger part of last Monday night: My Uncle I found had intended deferring his sentiments to the last Hour, which was a very agreable one in reserve for me, and from my concerted plans with your Son, not to fall out untill dinner on Tuesday; at ten on Monday night I received a card from Brownlowe, noticeing he was to be off from Baldock at four the next morning; I immediately asked my Uncle's horses for that hour, and he desired leave to bring forward his talk. He began with strong assurance of his affection towards me; and of the unfeigned concern he felt for my Happiness. He said he had never raised but one objection to my Attachment, and that arose from the incompetency of Fortune (as he is always both Plaintiff and Defendant in every detail, it was in vain for me to attempt an explanation at the certain and expected increase of my Income.) He continued to assure you Sir! 'that this is his sole and only reason for which I withhold my consent, if I drop myself, I leave you my approbation; my Fortune I have made to descend to you, and you will find that you may do as you best like with this place; I have made an handsome increase to your Mother's jointure and have added to your Sister's Fortune (this Sir is but the repetition of his intentions and declarations to me in

Febry. 1767) and now Sir! (continues his Worship) let me ask you for the very last time and I positively declare I will never again revive the subject; can you sacrifice a fond Affection to the accident of greater Fortune, and to the Consideration I have always set before you.' In my reply I said—that I was truly glad he would no more vainly attempt to remove a most sincere and unalterable affection; one that I must consider not only to my Happiness but to my Interest also, one that must and could end on one side only and therefore whatever was the Event I should claim no partial merit in his eyes. He muttered—that I treated the Expectancy from him more familiarly than it might deserve. I reply'd that the 'little degree of understanding I possessed could never suffer me to think on the casuality of such an Estate with Indifference but I must refuse the reality, and everything else if it was to be purchased at one price that I could not but declare myself obliged to him for the manner in which he conveyed his dissent that I was always assured that the generosity and ingenuousness of his Spirit would never suffer him to make use of Intimidations, and I trusted he believed me possess'd of a mind above the influence of such Terrors.' He reply'd —We are both above such meaness. Our converse (which I think I may term friendly) ended at one and very happy I was to pull off my Cloathes, altho but for two hours and a half, since then Sir! Brownlowe has given (I conclude) our Geography. I trust Sir it is needless to repeat the very true regard and esteem I bear Lady Cust and Miss Cust's. Permit me however to trouble you with my very best respects and sincere good wishes to Lady Cust, Miss Cust to Miss Elizabeth Cust and to assure you that I am,

" dear Sir,

" Your very faithful and obliged friend,

" PHILIP YORKE."

Mr. Charles Yorke, second son of the Chancellor, was, it may be remembered, godson of Mr. John Meller. His early literary efforts have been already described, his illnesses alluded to, and his terrible experience during the fire at Lincoln's Inn. The most talented of the sons of the Chancellor, Charles Yorke early began his successful legal career; but a heavy sense of responsibility weighed him down, and literature, not the law, would have been his own choice. Two years before taking his M.A. degree he was already in Parliament and distinguished in debate. He became Solicitor General in 1756, held office during the whole Pelham Ministry, and spoke on most of the great questions, the Mutiny Bill, Regency Bill, and the Marriage Act. He resigned in 1761 with the change of Ministry, but expected to be made Lord Chancellor with the return of Pitt. His hopes were disappointed, and he long remained silent and aloof. On the dismissal of Camden in 1776 the Court were most anxious to secure his services, but he was pledged to Rockingham not to take office. A private interview and personal appeal from his Sovereign put him on the horns of a dilemma. He accepted office, and then, overwhelmed with remorse, took to his bed and died after a few days' illness. With his dying breath he refused the Peerage, the price of his dishonour, and "hoped that the Great Seal was no longer in his custody."

Philip Yorke of Erthig was educated at the same school, and later on he was entered at the same college, and Mr. Charles Yorke must have known him from a child.

His note is short yet gracefully turned and he uses the same quaint expression "owls-light" for dusk

employed by Mr Lawry when writing to Philip's father Simon Yorke.

"*Monday night, March* 19, 1768.

"DEAR SIR,

"Wednesday morning at eight o'clock I hope is not too early for a rendez-vous in Bloomsbury Square, to set out with Mr Wray and me for Cambridge. My coach will take you a sober journey to Town by the way, and reach our Alma Mater by owls'-light. I have two servants on horse back. Wray will have one. Yours will increase the cavalcade.

"Ever your faithful and affectionate

"C. YORKE."

BROWNLOWE CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Downing Street,

"*March* 23, 1768.

"DEAR PHILIP,

"I got here last night from Oxford, where I left the Dr. and Mrs. R. Cust very well; and found Mr and Mrs Evelyn and Miss Dolly as much so here, in their way to Bath, for which place they proceeded on their journey at seven this morning. Most of my time this morning has been spent at Guildhall to see a little of the Polling. I staid long enough to be satisfied that Harley, Ladbroke, Beckford and Trecothick wou'd be the Members. The fight has been between this last and Sir Richard Glynn, but when I left the Hall, Trecothick had added a majority of 41 to his former majority of 107. They talk much at Oxford of the Abingdon Election, and almost all agree that Morton cannot possibly be confirmed by the House, for he has got a majority of two only, and the Returning Officer, Morton's friend, refused a Secretary which bears a very suspicious appearance surely. Sr Roger Newdigate

is certain of being chose for the University, but Parkinson pushes Mr Page, tho', I fear, to no purpose, and am sorry to say that the old interest will most probably be triumphant in the University, tho' Lord Abingdon's conduct has compleatly destroyed it in the Town, insomuch that the most Tory Member of the Corporation would rather choose a Member from one of the most zealous whig families in the kingdom, than give the least assistance to a Tory. I stay here till Sunday, when I set off for the Poll of the County of Huntingdon, and after having given my vote there my Father and I shall proceed together to Thurlow, where I hope we shall find everybody well. I heard they were so yesterday by a letter I received from a certain person today. They are there in the most perfect retirement that was ever thought of. The Small pox in the village has made it even more so than it used to be. They may amuse themselves therefore by reflecting upon the strong contrast between that and a London life. I expect to meet them there this day seven-night, and join with them in these reflections for about a fortnight when we shall return fraught, I hope, with a good stock of rural health to this City, therefore any letters that are to reach me between next Wednesday and that day fortnight must be directed to me at Henry Vernon's Esq. at Great Thurlow near Horseheath by London and Saffron Walden Bag.

" I am going to the Oratorio, for which I am already too late, and therefore I must give you the remainder of this letter when I write next, which I hope to do in a post or two.

" In the meantime I beg my best respects to Mrs and Miss Yorke and our Contemporary.

" I am, my dear friend,

" Your's very affectionately,

" Brownlowe Cust."

Philip's chief correspondents of the year 1768 are his mother and his friend. A batch of letters from Dorothy and her daughter Anne are followed by quite a long series from Brownlowe. Towards the end of the year Dorothy again takes up the tale, and a letter from Philip, almost swaggering in its youthful self-confidence, is in marked contrast to Dorothy's scarcely veiled anxiety concerning delicate little Anne.

Philip, with a filial devotion quite in keeping with his other sterling qualities, kept his mother's letters; but his descendants have hardly accorded to them the honour they deserve. Dorothy was not a well educated woman: her style is confused, her handwriting illegible; punctuation and grammar were of little account as pen and thoughts flew on rapidly together. It is her charming personality, not its literary merit, which gives a value to her correspondence. Her love for her children, her kindness to dependents, shine out in every line; she is humorous too, though perhaps unconsciously, on the subject of neighbours and servants, and her language on the subject of her brother (about whose vagaries she was most genuinely distressed) more forcible than elegant. Tradition says that in one (now lost) letter she expressed herself as follows "My poor brother is dying slowly of drunkenness and debauchery, and when I remonstrate with him he damns my eyes."

Lives of great men oft remind us,
As their pages o'er we turn,
That we sometimes leave behind us
Letters that we ought to burn.

Brownlowe and Philip were not great men, but they were manly, intelligent, well-bred, shining examples of the advantages of a school education under competent and sympathetic management; and Brownlowe, like Philip, had been sent from home at five years of age. Their handwriting is legible, their letters well expressed, and those of Brownlowe (Philip's to him as far as is known have not survived) contain nothing that he might have been sorry to have written or his descendants blushed to read. True, in the first extant letter he writes "have you burnt my last," but he was then acting as intermediary in the yet undeclared courtship of his sister by his friend.

From DOROTHY YORKE *to her son* PHILIP

"Erthig,

"*June* 17, 1768.

"A letter from you is one of my greatest Cordials, I thank God I am better than on my first remove to this place and most truly willing to pay any respect to our good friends at Lockinge except waiting on them this summer. I now am got settled and beg by your permission to remain so till late in Autumn; should you not by that time have a family to want your house; and then I should think it would be a more agreable viset to them: I busy myself a little in asking questions about Your affairs and I may venture to say there is not a more regular family in the principality of Wales. I hear of the Young Gentleman's constant attendence on Wrexham bowling green and on some sundays to Crosnewyd, glad I am if he would keep up that custom but I take his Worship to be quite [Etonian]. Pray what month does Mr. Wymondesold go to London. I should be glad to be

certain of that. I have a vast Satisfaction in going on my first entrance into London to their house. I will write either to him or Lady before I go there : at present I cou'd not bring Betty Ratcliffe, her Mother being in a very declining state of health. Betty, 'the little,' is at work for you ; but pray, my dear, do not employ her in that way again for one year at least as all her improvements sink in drawing and then I shall have no service from her and make too fine a Lady of her, for so much is said on that occasion that it rather puffs up : few minds like her Aunt's and your good father's admonitions about her to me was not to set her up too much.

"You will think me quite the Gouvernante somewhat of that sort having so Young a footman likewise to tutor a very [ ] accute one. I would not change with you for Sam do tell me what sort of Christian he is now or if of service to you. William remains chief Butler and behaves with discretion in the place, John J grumbling and working hard matter of Complaint wanting all hands for an hour in a morning to mow the Lawn. I promiss to speak to Mr. Cæser for this privilege to be granted. Do you think it necessary to keep the Lawn very neat, it was sadly rough when I came from Chester. . . ."

"*June* 21, *Tuesday*, 1768.

"My dear,

"As soon as Caesar appeared this morning your Chair and horse was mustarded up, not without some Deficiencys, the first some iron wanting, the latter hard worked by carrying stone and the men tell me she is much Wore out ; since I came from Chester. I have gone no farther than my pair can carry me. I find vast benefit by little rides on the dun mare and being still and quiet. I hope if William can hit on the right road

you will see him on Friday next but he looks already as if he was lost in a wood. Pray let me hear when he reaches you. Anne is gone to Plas Powr to a little hop made by Sir Richard and Mama so have eat My Morsel alone today, but she is to come home in the evening if ever so late."

"*July* 1, 1768.

"My Dear,

"I received both Your letters this morning. Your former goodness has even spoil'd me for had I not had a letter today I should have been quite uneasy. I thank God you are well, and happy; that is the sole wish of my life, that my Children may be so, I think from your own Conduct and prospect (in a very material action in life) you must meet with as much as this world can afford: I am very much grieved at your Uncle's oddity proceeding; from his dreadful excess in drinking. I do not for his whole fortune, wish you to be much with him lest it should taint your sobriety. I believe the Duce is in all old Bachelours. I think they are against all virtuous proceedings. I am glad William got safe to Belton, his not being very acute I was a little afraid for him; Poor Sam, I think, is but the skeleton of a Method[ ] (enough of that sort) indeed he is not at all improved for London air, ill in his health, he says he was often bad but did not mention it to you; now at Liverpool tells me his stay will be short. My little boy and his father so diligent that I cannot miss him. I have taken the Liberty to tell him in your name that he shall not draw teeth nor bleed in this house for I understand by Caesar he used to draw a vast quantity of Ale to supply his custumers for his Breeches trade &ct and we all fancy he will not trouble this world long: he is an odd soul that is certain."

"Chester,
"*May* 10, 1768.

"*To* Philip Yorke, Esq. at Mr Carpue Searle St. near Lincoln's Inn.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I should have wrote with the drawings which set out on Thursday last but for the hurry of the races. I went to all the Assemblys and liked them very well, they were vastly full every Night. I hope you received the Pea fowl safe, the reason of its being Plucked Mamma had sent for it but upon seeing your letter to John Jones ordered it away immediately. Mr Pennant has begged of Mamma to let Betty Ratcliffe coppy for him, from a print, the youngest of Lord Hardwicke's Daughters.

"Betty would be much obliged if you would get a sheet of the finest grained white Vellum and send it down by the Fly as soon as possible. Mamma Desires her Love to you and accept the same from

"Dear Brother, your affectionate sister,
"ANNE J. YORKE.

"I hope you will give my Duty to my Uncle when you see him. I hope he was not displeased at my accounts."

"Erthigg,
"*June* 10, 1768.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I am much Obliged to you for your kind Letter and according to your request have taken the first Opportunity of complying with yours. It is very pleasant here and Mamma says she does not want company but if you think Mrs Lawry expects Miss should be asked she desires you will do as you think proper. I thank you for the summer readings you intend me and can't but say it has raised my curiosity to see them.

The bridge is moved according to Order to the great concern of the Plas Gronow family and us as it hinders our evening walks to each other, it being very damp the other ways at Night. Betty is very busy about her Drawing, it will be done very soon, the reason it was not done before she waited for the Vellum to come safe. Mamma Desires her love to you. We hope to see you early next Month, and am, dear Brother,

" your affectionate sister,
" ANNE JEMIMA YORKE."

From BROWNLOWE CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

" Lincoln,
" *July 25th*, 1768.

" MY DEAR PHILIP,

" I hope you received my letter from Boston, which should have been sooner followed by another (for that was but a hasty and short scrall), but that place is so awkardly situated for posts that they set off at a part of the day when we were most employ'd in the business which we went thither upon, if I may say that one part of the day was more employed in that business than another, for *in truth* we were engaged incessantly from morning till morning again in examining impeachers and their impeached. My father and I did not leave Boston 'till Saturday morning, but neither we nor the rest of the gentlemen there assembled thought our time and labour ill bestowed since we have very good reason to think that we contributed not a little to the peace of the country, by encouraging the Magistrates (whom we found almost afraid to sign any warrant) and by examining the vast number of rioters that came before us either by warrants or voluntary surrenders, who so freely impeached their fellow rioters that I hope we have totally disunited them ; Four of the Ringleaders are to be tried here this

BROWNLOWE CUST, 1ST BARON BROWNLOW
By Romney. At Belton, Lincolnshire

assizes, three or four others who fled are indicted, which are all the examples we endeavour to make except three or four bound over to appear before Mr Deputy Recorder Cust at the next Boston sessions. Had they been suffer'd to go on for a week or fortnight longer I doubt not but these and abundance besides wou'd have been guilty of the most capital offences. Had not the Scotch Greys been there, the town of Boston must have capitulated, and have surrender'd to them all the arms they had, amongst which were two or three pieces of cannon, for it appears from a paper which we seiz'd, that their design was to get into their hands the cannon of Boston, and the Militia Arms lodg'd at Lincoln and Stamford. I have scarcely been at home twelve hours together since you left me, I got from Apthorpe on Sunday evening and set off for Boston on the Monday morning at seven o'clock, I got to Belton last Saturday to dine with the Judges, when I met Grimes and J. Reynardson two consellors upon the Midland. Belton, Friday 9th–29th. Thus far I had wrote on Monday last at Lincoln when I was call'd away to dine with Mr High Sheriffe and before my dinner was well down my throat the trumpets sounded and I march'd to be sworn upon the Grand Jury and to receive My Lord Clive's charge, which was such a one as I shall not easily forget; he said much in praise of riots that were made against inclosures, which besides the injury they do, said he, to the poor make the High Roads so bad that it was with difficulty I came from Northampton thither; and if he had stuck fast in truth it wou'd have been no loss to the country or to any part of the circuit, for nobody will either have their lives or property tried by such a lump of deaf and blind stupidity, so that all causes as he goes along are postponed and travers'd to the next assizes. Such did the Boston rioters, and I am glad they did, for had Aunt Clive acquitted them (as she did a man for stealing a watch to

the astonishment of everybody in court for he had nothing to say in his defence) she wou'd most likely cause a renewal of those riots which cou'd end in nothing less than bloodshed. Before the Chief Baron there was a prosecution of Bribery at the last Election, Viner against Scroope's agents, and Sir Fletcher was brought down by Vyner in support of the prosecution in which Jacob Reynardson had an opening Brief but Sam. Cox, my Uncle, and Newnham brought Scroope off in defiance of Sir Fletcher, who went post immediately into the West from whence he is to return to attend both at Leicester and Derby, which with Lincoln and three Causes at York will make this last and the next fortnight together worth about two thousand pound to him and he never goes into the country tho' it shou'd even be upon the Home Circuit for less than £300, and that was the sum he had at Lincoln. . . ."

"Belton,
"*July 29th*, 1768.

"My dear Philip,

"As our journey and visit at Grimsthorpe tomorrow will I am aware employ me the whole day, I begin another letter to you before my last is well got to Grantham being willing to make up for the deficiency of my manuscript hitherto, which nothing but incessant hurry shou'd have occasion'd. We are just return'd from our airing in the *Frisky* upon the heath, and I have the satisfaction to tell you that upon unnselling Lyon's new saddle we find it fits his back extremely well, and that the rollers (which Mr Stones talked so much about) make the sagging of the carriage in high quarters much less troublesome to the horse, in short it is now quite a complete vehicle, and is in high perfection upon our Heath of a summer's afternoon. You will have no small pleasure at being informed that it is in high vogue with

all the ladies here, nor will you be sorry to be told that they will very soon turn me out of it, as the cause of my seat in it, and the *sole reason* for your leaving it here, is now pretty well removed; for the wound upon my shin is *cicatrised* and I hope for *good*.

"Having enclosed in my letter by the Fly but one frank for Mrs. Edwards, I shall send some more in this, in the heartiest wishes that they may all contain accounts of his hasty steps towards a perfect recovery. If good wishes will either give him health or spirits pray inform him that he has those of every individual here; if you have but carried with you as a Comes jucundus a pretty love story book, you may perhaps say that it is worth while being sick to have the good wishes of *one* here, tho' upon consideration you may think that since her good wishes are so universally bestowed it will not be worth while to make yourself a subject for them. Do not fret and vex yourself with imagining that I am so absurd as to be silent and inactive in a cause which I have so much at heart, if I cannot be so incessantly upon the subject as you wou'd have me, yet I will venture to say that I talk more to her upon the subject in three days than you cou'd in three months; depend upon it therefore you may rely upon me, with the firmest assurance that you will find yourself in *as good a situation at least* upon your next visit, as you was at the conclusion of your last. When she and I are in Whisky and Lyon our Rephal I shall not I think want reminding of a certain Welch-man (whatever may be the case at other times) it was therefore no bad piece of policy in you to leave it, and perhaps upon that account you are as much obliged to that bridge which broke with me as I shou'd have been had it suffer'd me to get over it in a whole skin. The latter part of this letter I have wrote this morning (Sat. the 30th) which is now so far advanc'd that I expect the coach which is to carry us post twenty miles after a

pudding every moment therefore in haste Adieu and believe me, My dear Philip,

"Your sincere and most affectionate friend,

"BROWNLOWE CUST."

"Belton,

"*August 21st*, 1768.

"MY DEAR PHILIP,

"Your letter from Sturbridge I have this morning received and am truly glad to find that your friends from Lockinge were then moving with you towards Erthig, whither Mr Wymondesold, I hope, bore the journey very well. I shall be very happy at the earliest information (which in all probability *I* shall have) that you all got very well there, and had the satisfaction of finding Mrs Yorke and your Sister perfectly well. You say nothing of Tom Birch from which I conclude he is not at present at Erthig. A letter from Carpue last Friday preceeded by a few hours a box of Shrewsbury cakes, and some Grouse, which you will be glad to know, are *respectively* in great perfection. I write in haste, for I expect Whisky every moment to convey Cass and me to my Grandmother's Tea-table, but as I sent a noble quantity of Manuscript, besides Franks by the last post you will not grumble at a short letter to-night. I hope you will receive the three large (tho' not *too heavy*) packets next Wednesday morning; if you give me notice of their safe arrival by the return of the post which brings them to you, it will be the last I can receive here before I go into Norfolk: as soon as you receive this you must direct to me at Mr. Folkes's but observe we shall not stay there above a week. My best wishes attend Mr. Wymondesold for his speedy recovery, pray make my best Compliments to him and the ladies. I wish I cou'd see any probability of my meeting them at Erthig. I wish I cou'd come into Wales this summer because I

fear you will stand upon ceremony and will not make me a *second* visit, while I am in debt for the first, which added to the pleasure I shoud have in waiting upon Mrs and Miss Yorke, in meeting the present company there wou'd make a jaunt Westward very agreable to me. At present I must in this manner convey my best respects to Mrs Yorke and your sister and assure you that

" I am, my dearest Philip,

" Your most sincerely affectionate Friend,

" BROWNLOWE, CUST."

" Erthig,

" (*Saturday morning,*) *September 24th*, 1768.

" MY DEAREST FRIEND BROWNLOWE!

" You little know me, (after some communication of words, and thoughts when you can suspect me tired with any repetition of one (darling) subject; 'tis pretty clear I cannot tire myself in writing, reading then (and the matter so truly endearing) tho it was in itself really a Labour, but still with me be a pleasure; Labor ipse Voluptas was once the motto of a Chancellor, and I find I must put it down as I cannot strike of a satisfactory translation. You wave all acknowledgement of my Challenge and the appointment of the place and time of meeting: I have dared hope I might still see you within the Year at Erthig, but if (as I sadly suspect) the Mountain will not come to Mahomet, Why! Mahomet must go to the Mountain. Answer therefore immediately and if you will send it the night you receive this, by your Fly, the better; Say only that you sojourn a fortnight or 3 weeks longer at Lincolnshire, and I will mount your Grey and Sam shall kick a beast he has bought for Reddish up forwith to Belton. I have already finished the last improvement of this Estate; an advance quite adequate to my Expectations; I will not load the Post with particulars; hoping very shortly a nearer conference

with you : I was not out of my saddle or the dirt of overflowed fields, for 3 days but I look over all difficulties ; I see nothing insupportable, if it but brings me in the end nearer to one I love dearer than myself. I said I would not particularize and yet I must tell you I am about this Week under the direction of Vernon to let my whole Demesne for one year : I shall merely reserve a little Pasture, on the Feild close to my Barn or Stable ; and all this I do, that I may throw my whole Weight, my total complement of Teams and Workmen immediately on the Meadows ; I mean the improvement of these Meadows on either side of the French Mill, (under the Eastern view from the Walk in the wood) Vernon promises me next Spring, 50 shillings an acre for all that land, so regulated as we have planned : The whole piece is Fifty four acres and what may you think I receive for it now ; why 36£ exclusive of the Mill, which brings in £10 pr. an : and a piece (at the latter end, now in my own Hands) of 8 Acres, So you will easily guess the extent of this improvement, besides the abolition of an expensive unereturning Mill and a nasty road leading to it, which ruins and deforms that beautiful Spot of Ground. I *must* verily come and see you at Belton, so dont (unnecessarily) stop me : the look I ought to be indulged with, to physick a whole Winter's pain, and absense ; when you return to London, I shall move back again hither, and diligently superintend the accomplishment of so beneficial an undertaking ! I have also this Winter as I run one Mill, to restore and perfect another.— My Kings Mill exclusive of the Land held with it brings in 110 pr Annum. The Reparation, and Alteration by the Estimate, comes to near £200 : but Vernon *assures* me when my Mills are compleated on the intended Plan, they will produce me *singly* £200 per Annum. When these things are matured who ever be my successor here may think themselves indebted to me.—They are

pursuits I find myself willing and capable from a little Industry and pains of compleating, and I shall think not grudge Attention. Perhaps you have an Assembly in Embrio, if so I must bring some proper Cloathes,—not my silk Coat lest you again abuse it.—

"Believe me, my dearest Brownlowe!

"With all truth and affection,

"Your very grateful Friend,

"PHILIP YORKE.

"The Post urges.

"P S; I'll talk to you of Powis in my next. I didn't know he meant to commit Matrimony: I only know Penyerth was the butt and land mark of his utmost sail, from thence he came, thither he was condemned to Return. N.B.

"I must consider my Farm this last year very advantageous to me. I have by me now two years Wheat, two years Barley and near two years Hay, and a pretty good stock of Oats, and Peas—so I will well spare that large extensive demean for one year. Every feild will be kept to the Culture I shall dictate.

"Belton,

"*Saturday, October 1st*, 1768.

"MY DEAR PHILIP,

"I wrote a letter to you by the Fly last night to be put into the post at London this evening directed to you at Erthig, advising you in the name of all of us here to set off directly for London; but it may so happen that you have seen the necessity of being as near your Uncle as possible, if his last hour is approaching, as plainly as we did upon the receipt of your letter yesterday morning, and are therefore got to town; for which reason I now direct this to Carpue's. If you are in Town and have already seen your uncle it is unnecessary to mention to you what occur'd to me as I was writing to

you last night as a good excuse for coming to town, which was that you wanted to consult Mr. C. Yorke upon the Wrexham Toll, which with other little business that you had to do in town determined you to take London in your way to me; this I thought you might give your uncle as a reason for your coming to see him: for indeed, my friend, I see in Chilton a very alarming fellow, and as such have I long suspected him. And tho' your uncle's intention should be ever so good towards you, and his resolution of making you his heir so strong as not to be shaken by the most earnest and most artful endeavourers, yet who can tell how much that intention may be frustrated? Even forging is what necessitous rogues will not stick at. You have often told me that you have fear'd lest your uncle shou'd lose his understanding before his life. What an advantagious situation wou'd that put a necessitous hanger-on in? You must to be sure therefore at all events be upon the spot whenever your uncle is thought to be in danger, to watch every body about him as narrowly as a cat watches a mouse. I am very well aware that this business to a mind like your's will be very hateful, but the declining to cope with rogues that mean to use every wicked act to defraud your family, is not only weakness but injustice to yourself, your Mother and all your family: and the way to combat with them is to watch every motion they make, for circumstances that appear little and trifling in general may hereafter be of the greatest consequence, it is impossible therefore that you can trust any eyes or understanding but your own; if you want any advice and assistance from experienc'd friends, I know nobody that I can better recommend to you than my uncle Peregrine, who from the regard which he has for you will be I am sure very willing to assist you, and from the experience he has had will be able I think to do it; and I am induc'd farther to mention him to you because I know

you may rely upon and trust him, and I know in the critical situation you will be in, such a friend is of great utility, if it be only to unburthen the mind to, which will be sure to act with three times more vigour when it is so unburthen'd: I know was it my case I shou'd receive more support from such a friend than from anything. You may be sure we shall all be anxious to hear about you, and therefore pray dont fail to give us accounts of yourself and your goings on as often as possible. I shall write to-morrow night to Erthig if I dont hear by the post in the morning that you are got to town. Betsy is vastly well and so we are all, and sends with the rest of us best wishes for your health and success, the former is of the most consequence, for if you fail in the other you will have the same good prospect of the happiness you at present pursue.

"'Tis not in mortals to command success. But you do more, my Philip, you deserve it. I am summon'd to Tea and company therefore I can only say at present Be of good comfort and take care of your health.

"My dearest Philip,

"Yours most affectionately tho' most hastily,

"B. Cust."

"Belton,

"*October 13th*, 1768. *Thursday.*

"My dear Philip,

"I receiv'd yesterday your two letters one dated Thursday last, the other dated on Saturday, from which I am very glad to find that I may now direct to you in London. I hope to hear by to-morrow's post that you have found your uncle pretty well recover'd, and I shall be very anxious to know in what way he has been whether so bad as C— represented him to be. If you find him so well as that you can leave him, and think it worth while to come down here, tho' my Father and all his family except myself set out from hence for London on Monday

se'nnight. We shall be extremely glad to see you. As I am not Speaker but only Speaker's son, and a common member of Dom : Com : I do not think it necessary to be in town so soon as my father by a week or ten days, and as I have been very much press'd by Hildyard to visit him in Yorkshire before I go to town for the winter and have long ago partly promised him I have some thoughts of taking that time between the going of my father and my own to take a jaunt into Holderness which is from here about sixty miles. If you shou'd come down here, and shou'd then be inclined to accompany me, I am very sure you wou'd give Hildyard great pleasure : but in this matter you will do as you see best, and wisest with respect to your Uncle. We are all very well, and no one better than she whom you talk *so foolishly* about, however, I take care to let her know of all your folly, in hopes that she will one of these days make you wiser. You talk of my having had a Tertian disorder, but I now think there are some symptoms of it's coming to a daily fit, for the pens of lovers I know by experience are never tired. Our house is at present somewhat thin'd of inhabitants for besides a dozen and half which went out of it last Friday when the Rolfes, the Kestevens and Folkes with their servants went away, the Miss Cartwrights set off yesterday.

" All here desire their best compliments to you and

" I am, My dear Philip,

" Your's most affectionately.

" Brownlowe Cust."

" Belton,

" *October* 15, 1768. *Saturday.*

" Dear Philip,

" This morning's post brought me your letter from which I am glad to find that you got well to town. I am very apt to believe that your uncle will at times think it no improper piece of attention in you towards

him and I hope to hear in your next that he is no ways averse to seeing you ; for I shall think his not seeing you will rather look suspicious, as he has never yet been unwilling to receive your visits. I should be sorry to have a bad opinion of Chilton if he don't deserve it but my opinion of him cannot be formed upon any thing I have seen of him individually for I dont know him, but it is upon the ideas I have of the frailty of human nature where great temptation and opportunity conspire together. My father and I are both of opinion that things bear a very promising appearance from C's coming to you and talking so freely about Mr Huttons affairs, and I have great hopes that things will turn out well for you, but it is difficult to form any good judgment while one is at this distance. You upon the spot will be able to judge better for yourself in what manner you shou'd act : it appears to us that you judg'd very wisely in not going to see him without first knowing whether it would be agreable to him to see you. We shall hear, I hope, from you again in a post or two, and you shall very often receive our sentiments upon matters that occur for I see plainly from the ingenuous manner in which you receive advice that I run no risk in offering our sentiments to you very freely so far from it that I am persuaded you wou'd not think I acted the part of a friend if I did not do it ; and besides judging from myself I think it must very much alleviate your anxiety to receive the opinions of those who wish you so thoroughly well.

" The bell for dinner has rung, and an engagement to tea this afternoon with Gilbert, who is really ten years younger in appearance than when you left us, prevents me adding more than the joint kind compliments and wishes of all here in which include

" My dear Philip,

" Your very affectionate,

" Brownlowe Cust.

" Your letter remains a secret to all the family but me and the four more, and is now in the hands of one whom you and I love very tenderly.

" I hope Chilton will turn out as honest as you think him, and am ready to believe he will, yet excuse me for hinting to you to be on your guard about what you say to him, lest he shou'd be otherwise and shou'd repeat anything to your Uncle to your disadvantage. I think this caution unnecessary yet as my Father mentioned it to me, I cou'd not satisfy myself without adding it to you."

" Belton,

" *October 20th*, 1768. *Wednesday.*

" Dear Philip,

" You will think me a great friend to Quack medicines by sending you the enclosed receipt for a Dropsy ; but tho' I am very far from being so, I cannot take upon me to refuse to enclose it to you as it was given to us by a Lady who has very lately been with us, and was thought to be in that disorder ; and farther because I have known a Quack medicine entirely recover a Gentleman within two miles of us after he had been pronounc'd incurable of that distemper by the late eminent Dr. Taylor ; the person I mean was Sir Francis Whichcote, he was cured by an Ostler, who had his medicine from a travelling Tinker, what that medicine was I can't learn as the Ostler is dead, but as a Quack receipt has been of service in one case, it may be so in another ; and therefore I send you the enclosed having reserved the copy of it, but I choose to send you this instead of the copy because you will perhaps be romantick enough to say it will be more salutary if deliver'd in the hand writing of my sister Betsy, she had copied it from the one which the lady lent us, and desired me to send you a copy of hers. I knew nothing of it 'till yesterday she mention'd it to me, and desir'd I wou'd inform you

of it; I am sure it will give her most extraordinary pleasure shou'd it prove of real service to Mr. Hutton. We shall be very glad to hear that he is the better for his operation on your account as well as his own, for I am very sure that his affectionate behaviour which you mention in your letter of this morning must add to your feelings upon his account. If you think it worth while to mention this medicine to Mr. Hutton you had better write out a copy of it for him than to give him this which I send you as it would renew a subject which it would be wisest to leave untouched upon. We all join in kind compliments to you and,

"I am, in haste,
"My dear Philip,
"Your affectionate
"BROWNLOWE."

DOROTHY YORKE *to her son* PHILIP

"*October 14th*, 1768.

"MY DEAR,

"I am vastly Obliged to you for Your kind Concern for me and your letter returned by William, he and horses came safe and well. I am sorry you met with such bad roads I hope the rest of your Journey was better. I have been out this day on horse and foot which I bear very well, I am I thank God much recovered.

"Shocked this day by reading 2 letters I took the liberty of opening directed to you, one from Mr. Chilton which should have been here last Tuesday, he says your Uncle is extremely ill indeed, and attended by Dr. Dawson and Dr. Fothergill, "he thinks he may venture to say your Uncle will be glad to see you when you do come to town, having a great regard for you," these his words :—Carpue's—"Your Uncle Continues very ill and so ill that I shall think it almost a miracle if he recovers,

they, says, he has a dropsy and is vastly impatient and peevish, and begs you to see him,—Carpue; before you see your Uncle. I do not fear your discretion on the melancholy affair. I pray to God to grant him ease of mind and body. Mr. Chilton tells you, he was advised to go to Bath. . . ."

"*Nov.* 1, 1768.

"My dear,

"I fully intended to have wrote to you by last Monday's post but was quite laid up on Sunday and all next day with my disorder in a worse manner than ever: was blooded which has relieved me; and was resolved for Bath; got a coach and four from Chester for that purpose, set out Monday morning next for Shrewsbery, as to money affairs have enough to set out with, that you need not hurry your payment now and when I am at Bath I will let you know when I want some. I think I coud stay very well till your tenants pay you at Xmas or longer if I could have that is owing to me from the Gentleman at Bristol. I will take care to leave every thing in your house under proper care and order. I take Betty Ratcliffe, B. Bevan and John and Boy with me. I imagine you will like your servants that are left to be on board wages, if so I shoud think you might have your mutton from home which is now very fine. . . ."

"*Sunday, November* 13, 1768.

"My dear,

"In the first place I must tell you we got safe to this City on Friday evening, set out on the Sunday before at 7, dreadful bad roads, and tho' I had not been downstairs for a fortnight. Yet I bore my journey pretty well; tho far from being so; I have not since I come into my Lodgings on Saturday put my head out of doors, very good ones I have got at Mr. Coes in Millsome Street. I have a spare bed-chamber at your service and a spare

seat in a pew likewise. I have taken to day; excessive high everything is here. I shall not partake of the grandeur or amusements of the place, shall feel the expences of it and I believe I shall not relish it at all. The doctor I have consulted says I must not drink the waters till further prepared for them, my spirits are lower than when at Erthig even the worse. I am every day and night thinking how miserable my poor brother is. I am sorry for him with all my soul; what says he on my coming to Bath. Make our proper complements and good wishes towards him. I rejoiced to see your hand but was greatly disapointed at so few words. Betty Ratcliffe is "greatly obliged" puts in her own words of my desire—one thing puzzled, as we are very short of men acquaintance—as to my part. I am quite a stranger to the present world. I know not above 3 or 4 persons here. . . ."

"Bath,
"*Dec.* 3, 1768.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"As Mamma dared not hold down her head for the waters she deputed me to return you a great many thanks for your kind letters which she says are a great comfort to her and begs you will write as often as you can. I would have wrote sooner but we have been sadly frighted by Betty Ratcliffe having been dangerously ill, but thank God the Doctor thinks her in a very good way at present. Mamma thinks the waters agree with her pretty well but is oblig'd to have the Doctor sometimes. We sent John to Bristol last Saturday to know how Mr J Edwards did, he says he is got quite well and proposed to keep his Xmas at Glyntinne, he talks of coming to see Mamma before he goes. We have got Mrs Wymondsold's musling and gloves and would be very glad if you would put us in a way to send them to her. I am very sorry my Uncle is so indifferent. Pray you my Duty and my

Mamma's best love to him. Miss Lawry came here last Thursday. We have seen her once. I am just going to the Play with Mr and Mrs Williams who are exceeding civil to us. Mamma desires her kind love and accept the same from

"Dear Brother, your affectionate sister,
"ANNE JEMIMA YORKE.

"Bath,
"*December* 3, 1768."

"*December* 4. Since I wrote my last Mamma has had some return of her disorder and she had a very bad Night but has been bled this morning and I hope to God she will be much better for it. I have a very good opportunity of sending this by Mrs Barnston. I will write next post to let you know how Mamma does."

JOHN LAWRY *to* PHILIP YORKE

"*Tuesday evening, November* 15*th*, 1768.

"DEAR COSIN,

"Going out upon business at nine this morning, I did not receive your favor of yesterday till this afternoon. My Wife hath kept a bed aired ever since I had the pleasure of knowing you was in Town by calling at Carpue's last week, and I entertained, every fine day since, some glimmering hope of seeing you here.

"I am very sorry that the 'apeirokalia' preceeding our setting off for Rochester at nine on Thursday morning will cause us to have less enjoyment of your company just at this time than we would wish to have; we go only for a fortnight; after our return we shall be very much obliged to you for the favour you have in petto for us. Indeed I have long wished for the pleasure of seeing you here less limited and confined in time than you have hitherto been when so kind as to call upon us. You may

always depend upon finding a well-aired bed under the care of my good woman, and even in Winter, if the weather be open, something not un-pleasing in Blackheath, and the other, environs of this place; You have indeed hitherto seen very little of them, and you will always find a sincere welcome, though a primitive and plain entertainment under the parsonageous roof of dear Sir, your affectionate Kinsman and very humble servant,

"JOHN LAWRY.

"My Wife and Daughter join with me in best respects. I hope you have heard a good account of my Aunt and Cosin being got well to Bath. Fanny hopes she shall have an opportunity of paying her respects to them in a few weeks there."

"Rochester,
"*December 12th*, 1768.

"DEAR COSIN,

"My stay here hath been longer than I proposed when I came down. I have had some business to imploy me, and Lee is really so solitary except when such a chearful Friend as you comes down to enliven it, that to tell you the truth I had rather, be any where else unless I had your company more frequently here, and here are at hand always some of *the implumes bipedes*, whom one may comfortably enough converse with. I shall return to Lee a day or two before X'mas, or about the middle of next week, feeding chiefly upon the hopes of seeing you to take a lodging with us sometime during our residence there, which according to our present plan will last through January; and then I hope to return here again for six weeks or two months, in which place also, when your affairs will admit of a few days' excursion, and your inclination shall lead you to see this part of Kent, I shall with Mrs Lawry be always

happy to see you as well as at Lee. I read by your advice 'Yorick's Sentimental journey,' His wit I think through all his writings is 'velut trans nubila lumen' I was well diverted in some places; But met here with an old acquaintance whom I had not seen for between 30 and 40 years, who caused me to laugh more than Mr Yorick did, and that was the late Mr Henry Fielding in his Tragedy of Tom Thumb the great, which was acted at the little Theatre in the Hay-market while I was at School.

"In the grave way, and in the way of my own profession, I have met with a short Sermon of your Friend, Dr Worthington, Preb: of York, preached last April at Christ Church, London, at the yearly Meeting of the Charity Schools, worth all the sentimental and all the sermon-like writings of the late . . . Sterne, Prebend of York, and a cart-load of the like writings to boot. It treats of the benefit and importance of a religious education and taken from Numbers, II, 29. 'Would God, that all the Lord's people were prophets.'

"Simon arrived safe at Rochester last Tuesday; had come from Eton through perils of water away from thence on the Sunday, (the 4th) with most of the Boarders in the same house, a day before the time set, our good Dame being frightened with apprehensions of an increase of the waters, of famine and what not. They were boated between Eton and Slough. He sends his most respectful compliments to you. I was glad to find by my Daughter's letter from Bath of yesterday, that though my Aunt had been somewhat indisposed she was better and in her dining room on Wednesday last. I beg when you write, if you have room, you will make my thanks to her for her obliging offer to Fanny of riding her own steed which carries double behind the Coach man. I enclosed a short letter to my [ ] this evening, under a Cover franked by Mr Bennion, not

having Fanny's letter just before. I ommitted thanking Mrs Yorke particularly for this other offer, which I trouble you, when you can find time to do for me in one of your letters.

"I am, my Wife joining in hearty respects, dear Sir, your Affectionate Kins-man,

"JOHN LAWRY.

"I was sorry to hear poor Mrs Betty Ratcliffe had been very ill; I am afraid it hurt my Aunt."

DOROTHY YORKE *to her son*

"*December* 15, 1768.

"MY DEAR,

"Your goodness to me I look on as a very great Comfort and blessing. I have Continued better in health since I wrote to you than I have been for this twelvemonths past, notwithstanding a very great pull-back this week by your Sister's illness of a feverish cold began last Monday. That evening I sent for our Doctor Gustard. She was bleed which seem'd then to relieve her, but still her heat too great till today; is now much abated and taken to sleep well, with few sweats, her uneasiness and apprehension of a Fever have been terrible to herself and me, the faculty about her tell me they see no sort of danger in her case now. She has a very good nurse who has attend me, and Betty Ratcliffe tho' rather weak is able to assist; her disorder was a violent flux, attended by some inflammation. I pray God send, and am in great hope, I shall have no more Complaining letters to send you and that Anne may benefit by her present discipline as much as I have done. She has not by nature so much patience (I may say without flattery) as yourself, but a great quickness and thought, which is rather a disadvantage to her at her early age, and more difficult for one to Conduct. I may say

with truth, she judges as properly in her behaviour when mixed with strangers as is possible for the discreetest person to do : and has been vastly reasonable in point of diversions since she came here. It gives me much pleasure.

" My poor Brother is better. I hope his temper Continue to be Calm. I have sent Mrs W a muslin gown and gloves by my good Old Friend Mrs Freman, directed for you at My Brother's Her bill of their cost is with them. Let me know when they come to London, and how soon in Spring they go back. You judge very right as to the present strength of my pocket, by Xmas it will be quite time enough for my £200 : more I would not have sent to me whilst at Bath the £150 I would not wish to have till I see Erthig again. I am sure I shall always feel as much Concern to hurry you to find my payment as you can be to owe it me, for any time if I could have got a sum, as certain gentleman has of mine, now not far off me, I need not have troubled you till my return ; but a little dirty money discovers people's nature to one, he told my man he would be sure to see me before He went for home. Indeed I have not wrote to him about it but if he does not, I shall fancy a reason. I was vastly provoked with Mrs Myddelton's letters of three weeks old enclosed in your's and I have wrote to Mr Caesar to beg to hear from that spot often that poor B. Ratcliffe may oftener hear how her Mother and Aunt are.

" The Bishop of Chester and Lady have been vastly good to us. I have air'd twice with Mrs Keen. We are going to lose our good friends Mr and Mrs Williams [ ] they seem happy in each other's company. Miss Lawry's Uncle Bennet is, quite good-natur'd and civil to me, and his Lady. I like my great Neece, what I have seen of her, very well. I have just received a kind letter from Mr Lawry, with proper Complements to your Uncle. Your Sister has been talking much about

Mr Cust's franks. She knows nothing of my writing this Post; Is in a fine sleep.

"Adieu, my Dear,

"I am your affectionate Mother,

"Send me a little of your hair to enclose in a ring or locket."

"*December* 17, 1768.

My dear,

"Was I not further obligated by your letter, and the present of venison, which came safe to me on a few minutes after it, I was resolved to write by to night's post to inform you how purely Anne is recovered and eat a bit of Chicken in the dining room today. She has had a most threatening cold, bleed Monday night, and Tuesday again; very inflamatory blood the loss of which seems to have done her great Service not weakened her near so much as I expected and I hope will set her for long from her tendency to fevers.

"Now my Dear I must beg you to make my acknowledgements to Lady Cust for her Obliging message and present. I have not had one of a long time, gave me more pleasure as it is respectful to another quarter.—You can guess me now I am sorry you should strip Erthig for me. I hope you have my letter in answer to money affairs. You make me uneasy you give yourself so much trouble about me, be sure to send me but 200 whilst here. I am really happy you remember the poor old begars, in your neighbourhood, some small donations while I am absent are going on for me, so pray do not slip into my place to save my pocket as you will find enough to do on your parts, is there anything I can do for you in this City. I am going to loose the few I know, most people moving off at Xmas the Bishop and Mrs Keen Mr and Mrs Williams Pembed Mr and Mrs Hopkins, he has made

himself ill with bathing when he first came he looked many Years Younger than I last see him. General Warburton never fails sending Anne and me tickets for ye balls.

" Poor Mrs Ford's Cousin Davies (Doc. Davies widow) who lives here is vastly civil to me. Mr Lloyd's lady I saw at their home. Lady Malpas and her Mama we are likewise obliged to, who have a house near us. Lady Cunliffe is expected here soon, plenty we have at this place but dear, so we do not indulge ourselves in nicetyes, have not bought a feather kind but Chickens and small birds since I came, for here is no hospitality as in Chester, our living is on dishs as good and as much variety as I wish for as long as I do live. Do's my poor brother enquire about us. Mrs Staffordshire has been in a parlour of our house and challenge me as an old acquaintance, an odd soul so no great satisfaction. She took great notice of Anne and said I had been very like her. I leave in your hands to give the proper compliments to all. I am glad to hear you have been to see the good Birches. I never wrote, but my back aches so can hold out no longer."

II

All through the varied correspondence of Edisbury, Meller, and Yorke, the attempt has been made to arrange the letters as far as possible in their chronological order ; but in the case of Philip custom gives way to necessity, especially with the correspondence of the years 1769 and 1770. Was it purpose or hazard which led to the preservation of such a mass of correspondence ? More likely the first, since the one year leading on into the other culminated in an " Annus mirabilis " the crowning point of Philip's life. Some fanciful letters written by

Brownlowe and his sisters mark the growth of their intimacy with Mr. Yorke. Sir John Cust's letters, which fill in a gap while his son was on a continental tour, all continue to give a detailed history of Philip's wooing, and the progress thereof. Incidentally they contain a great deal of information on mundane affairs concerning both families. Selections only from Dorothy's letters would alone form a whole chapter, and finally (the originals were tied up in a bundle by themselves) comes the sensational series on James Hutton which cannot possibly be separated.

" The ladies have often experienced what an uncertain *Beau* they have for dealing with, when Mr Yorke is the Man and as it is not possible for them, to *secure* another *such* a Beau, with such short notice ; they thought it very advisable to treat Sam with a Ride ; to inform Mr Yorke of their intelligence : There are many Signs, and Wonders in the West, which foretells a very fine evening : no other evening they can appoint as Lady Wheate is going out of Town, you can have no fears with so good a *Hen ;* either for *yourself* or others—The Ladies do once more desire Mr Yorke will come let the weather be foul or fair ; they shall regard it a great want of good nature, good sense, and good manners, if he does not use all his endeavours not to disapoint them, and their party. The Ladies desire likewise that Mr Yorke (after he is arrived) will not *oversleep himself* but be in Downing Street a quarter before Seven precise as he must escort them thither to Vauxhall—No answer has been received from Mr Ryder perhaps he is not in town, secure Tom Birch if you can, you can make easy *the only objection I am sure* we had to asking him. The Ladies wish Mr Yorke a pleasant ride."

"*To* Philip Yorke, Esq.

"Counsellor Cust presents his Compliments to Younsellor Corke (for the tenure of grand Serjeantry is abolished from the House of Cust by the House of Yorke. A plague to both your Houses !) and hopes to hear that he is well after travelling for Volat.

"The Alderman of Grantham, for whose Office Mr Yorke always entertains a due Respect, droops for his Loss—Father Peete hangs down his head—Stanser is full of unease and the rest of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, that bear Office in that learned Body, are dejected ; while the Pig is changed from a House of Feast to a House of Mourning. The Town-Clerk and young Stoke are gone to Town ; but if this manner of Writing is imitated too servilely, there is Ground to apprehend as much Blame in the affair of Majorca as the Ministry had in the affair of Minorca.

"Baldock,

"*January* 16, 1769."

"*Feb.* 6, 1769.

"Lady Cust presents her Compliments to Mr Yorke ; returns him many thanks for his obliging Letter, she received this Morning, and for the good accounts he gives of the Speaker and his Family being in good health, for indeed the Speaker's Friends are very anxious for his well-fare, as he goes through such prodigious Fatigues.

"The young Ladyes desire to return their Compliments to Mr Yorke."

"*February the* 15th, 1769.

"The Cust Ladies of Grantham present their best respects and acknowledgements to Mr Yorke, for his late obliging notice of them, transmitted upon a profusion of Paper, and Compliments, that they can't longer excuse

themselves from a written address of thanks to himself, and as Mrs Dorothy Spinster, is neither afraid of causing jealousy in her own sex or scandal from his, shou'd she write to a Young gentleman, she takes upon her, to tell Mr Yorke by her own Pen, how particularly she thinks herself oblig'd to him for the trouble he takes on her account, and the attention he is pleas'd to shew for her Person and Safety; She must own her Ideas of an Italien Whiskey or Chair were far more Elegant and agreable than Mr Yorke has describ'd, however she allows he has Painted out a most lively and Entertaining account, of all its motions, which seem much more pleasing in Theory than Practise, and as she's so happy to be Honour'd with the Assistance of two Able *Prime Ministers*, and the additional satisfaction to reflect that they are young Beaus she will be perfectly contented with whatever choice they make for her, and intirely submit to their better judgment being assur'd that she can't fail of an easy Carriage, when procur'd by two such supporters as she may boast of."

To Philip Yorke Esq. from a Cheshire neighbour

"Dear Sir,

"I hope this will find you and our contemporary in perfect health and high spirits at Erthig in order to be assured of it. Geoff Barnston and self intend dining with you at Erthig next Wednesday; if you have no expedition on your hands for that day; if you have let us not interrupt it you may signify the same by next monday's carrier; but I never love to obstruct young men's amusement; especially as I guess your time will now be very short in this part of the world and the attractive powers in another; irresistable powers that will draw more than a cable of a first rate man of war—Fortiter occupa Portum. I desire you'll present my compliments

to Mrs. and Miss Yorke and Mrs. Cust and believe me, to be your affectionate Friend and humble servant

" Edward Lloyd.

" Chester,
" *25th March*, 1769."

Dorothy's letters of this year are full of the affairs of her cousins, the Misses Jones, the elder of whom had in 1747 beguiled the weary coach journey by "reading aloud." Mr. Hutton had increased her jointure and made an allowance to Anne, by no means an unmixed blessing to these gentle souls, who had to account to him for the spending of it. Miss Lawry's proposed visit to her Aunt came off at this time, not altogether with success, moreover she omitted to write afterwards. It is with a sharpness quite unusual that Dorothy writes " Have you seen the little Lawry since she went to town I thought she would have wrote to Anne but her good manners are all outward, a shy little madam when with us."

The first note of tragedy was struck at the close of 1768, when Ann was enduring the drastic remedies of Dr. Gustard, and in the spring of 1769 she was actually living under the same roof, breathing the same air as Miss Jones, then believed to be in an advanced stage of consumption !

Dorothy Yorke *to her son*

" *February 4th*, 1769.

" My Dear,

" You are vastly good to supply me by yesterday's post your 3 bank bills, in this place one has a surprising quick consumption for money with what is called necessaries, go as little beyond as we can. You know

enough of the World to be a Judge that even private Gentlefolk shares is now-a-days not within bounds. I am sorry my poor brother thinks at all of Anne's account. I fear any article in them should make him uneasy or flutter his spirits. I will not venture to send them unless he insist upon it. I would rather give her any sum she should want. We are laying out by way of housewifely, a white tafity she tells me against your Worships marriage, a shop here, I believe Billy Lloyd has Connection with, that does much in Print'd goods and other very tempting affairs. The Bishop of Asaph I have sent my Compliments to here, and waited on his very old Sister. I remember they have been vastly Civil to you. We are very grate with your Cousins Jones mighty Chearful good natured Lady's they seem on pursuit of a home I find, but cannot tell where to settle and say they must consult Convenience more than liking, they I think avoid speaking of their brother, is anything the matter between them. . . ."

"Erthigg,

"*April* 4, 1769.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I hope this will find you in London after a pleasant journey. The accounts should have come by post if I had done them. Mamma has wrote a letter with them to my Uncle. I wish they may be graciously received. Lady Cust's gloves are not done yet else I should have sent them with this letter but I will take care to send them as soon as they are finished. Pray remember to send the sword knot with the spangles and gold thread as soon as you can. We have heard nothing of the Baron only that he has had a bad night which I fancy is laid to . . .

"Mamma is very well and Desires her love.

"I am, Dear Brother your affectionate sister

"ANNE JEMIMA YORKE."

" *Tuesday night, April* 12, 1769.

" I hope, my Dear, this will find you free from any bad Complaints you may have had from your cold. I fear you have had a very severe one, I am glad you met with a civil reception, sincerely sorry I am when I hear of the Contrary from that quarter. Your patience indeed is exercised. Happy it makes me to find you are master of so good a quality. I thank God I am as well as you left me, have to some purpose been travelling after Cousin Jones's Saturday morning 9 o'clock set out with the help of my Old horses for Chester stay'd till Sunday evening, then set out alone for Erthig again nor have I heard a word from [ ]. I expected this post I fear some accident [ ] has befallen them, I trotted much about particularly for Ladys gloves. I send by the waggon tomorrow and the venison. I am sorry my supply is so small. I have a fairing for Tom Birch and was so forgetful as not to give you, I post it with the above and beg you will send it to him. I hope Mr Cust and all that family are well. Case has come I imagine to be Sir John's print ordered into your study, do not go into the city tomorrow to increase your cold on my account, I beg. Caesar promises me to £40 next week. I am not frightened with the apprehension of want of money in this place. I wish I was the giver and not the receiver of all money and other good things to you but that can never lie in my power so it is a vain thought. No new occurence except Mrs of the Post Office vacant 8 candidates for it. Caesar carried Tommy yesterday to bind him to Gerry, the Gardener, for 5 years. Margaret still assists me as Cook. I see one yesterday ask'd £25 a year. I begged to be excused, today you have 14 workmen as I see turning the river by your great [ ] poor Ned Geller very ill, the best head of all Your workmen. Make my proper Compliments as due, particular to the Grandee in his den. I hope you will not suffer on our

Account, they went last Wednesday do not give them if you see it improper. Your sister has kept house since you left us. I hope her Cold is going off, her kind love attends you."

* * * *

"A fine soft rain all day, not a blade of new grass is to be seen about us. I will direct your box of gloves to you in Searle Street. I write to Birch and mention his so he will send for it."

"*5th May*, 1769.

"I am vastly glad my Dear you have received my letters and the matters so much writ about, your sister in the highest spirits imaginable with the expectation of your present of silk. On Saturday we were at Chester but met it not, tho stay'd till the Fly came in nor my [ ] Yet, I fancy Sam he's forgot to obey your orders in sending them out. We ware to see a very pretty lodgins by Dee side for Miss Joness to board and maid for seventy pound a year with a Quaker and wife who live very neat and well, found out for them by Mr. Lloyd and Mrs. Mainwaring the gentlemen to my great surprise went with us, and told me he had made it his business to inquire ever since he knew I wanted for such a place. we agree that they are vastly lucky; but they seem not to know what it is to bustle in this world and do not guess at the inconvenience to be met with in most boarding houses. This promised beyond expectation, a Charming large garden belongs to it. The Miss Joness are quite good natured and well behaved but as much town Ladys as if born and bred there. Wrexham will not by any means do for them especially the Eldest who dotes on gayety and Company, to my great pleasure and Comfort Miss Alicea Jones is much recovered, they talk of Leaving me in 3 weeks. I will then take another trip for their service to Chester. We are grown charm-

ingly pleasant here now. I walk and ride when I can. William will be in bad plight as I must, I fear, set him on a coach-horse when the bay mare is come to London. Madam Scrogey is big as she can tumble, little whisky almost wore out the blind scarecrow almost always in Caesar's service which is happy he can use he being exceedingly low spirited and much out of heart and the constant drain for money on the Mill accounts I think affects him. My mouth at present stopped on that subject. I have received £20 of the 40£ you mentioned from him and shall not want for some time. Mr. Lloyd has changed me and fifty bills for me. Caesar tells me he has a dun from Mrs Myddleton every week and against or on Holy Thursday he hopes to have the money for those nasty folk. I have not been to their house nor believe I ever shall. Mrs. Lloyd of Plas Power told me yesterday Mary Fitzhugh sat very near you at the Opera the other night. You did not see her. I hope you have paid her a visit by this time. I am truly concerned you have such late rides from your poor dismal Uncle's. I doubt you will still find him worse for living on liquor, it is dreadful to think of him, much more to converse with him. I think I have performed business in getting off yesterday morning to you to Belton a young Cow, Daughter of Radwell, 3 years old, with your young Bull (you mention'd to Mr Cust) Mr Sams purchase a horse 2 bull Calfs each of the Alderneys cows brought which made me send the above young cow that they may have the true Breed at Belton. I inclose my Compliments to Miss Custs in which you will wrap the presents. Pray what is the eldest Ladys. Alter my words as you like, and get them wrote by a female hand. I am really so deficient in fashionable address that I am ashamed of my own. I fully intended you this letter last post but my head so much out of sorts with a useall noise in it I cou'd not hold it down I believe for want of an Emetick which

I have play'd truant lately. Anne desires me to say a vast deal to you for her sword nott goes on apace and we do all we can to get the gloves but without success, last week nothing to be done with the work people at Chester till after the races. Your sister and Miss Disbrowe are just Crasey with the thought of being there on Friday and Saturday, they go and return in Post Chaise that your works may not be broke in upon, We are quite a covey of women, so that we take abundance of little flights. Do not tell any old bachelors of us, we are indeed much more peaceable than them and I hope do more good and contributes to young persons happiness when in our power. Mrs Disbrowe I am fond of having here I am afraid she leaves me next week. . . ."

"*May* 9, 1769.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I hope you will not think me quite ungrateful for not returning thanks sooner for the very pretty silk, which I did not receive till Thursday evening and on Friday morning Miss Disbrewe and me went to the Races at Chester for one night. I called on Mr Lloyd who is very well, and enquired much after you and wanted to know when you would be coming in this part of the World again. I have been twice to the old Glovers to hasten him about the Gloves he said I should have them this week. I will take care to send them immediately with the sword knott. I liked your fancy as to the silk immensely. Had I been to choose it myself I could not have had one that pleased me more. Miss A. Jones seems to have quite got the better of her disorder. Both of them desire their compliments to you. Mamma desires her love and hopes you received her letter by Monday's post. I wonder my Uncle takes no notice of my accounts as I kept back everything that he might think extravagant, and he must know how much of the

£50 goes on Mussick. When you go to see him pray give my Duty that may put him in mind of my accounts, but do not if you think it will put him out of humour. John the Coachman desires me to tell you that he has thought of putting out his eldest son apprentice to Mr Parry the gardener at Chester but stays for your approbation. You once mentioned helping him to some employment, and should be very glad if you would give an answer in your next letter. Scrog brought a very fine filly last week. All your friends about here are well.

"I am, dear brother,

"Your affectionate sister,

"ANNE JEMIMA YORKE.

"Mr Caesar begs I will tell you that none of Waggoners are to be trusted with the Young Mare and unless you wait till Midsummer it must come by one of the workmen."

"*May* 13, 1769.

"I am sure, my dear, I am as pleased as you can be that the late affair so much on your mind is executed to your satisfaction, set down to my account the expenses of the twee and be assured you are most heartily welcome to any service in my power that I can at any time rend you. Your sword nott is done I think Elegantly, the Gloves not yet come, would you have me pay for them or send the Ladys their bills. The last I paid for. I do not mention this as a dun for I look on my part of your dear Father's fortune as the property of his children and wish them the greatest use of it. Your sister hoped by this you have received her letter. As soon as we have your advice the mare shall set out, William hopping about, on Wednesday she threw him off her back by way of taking leave, I suppose, yet I daresay with good management she will carry very well. As to speaking to Caesar about business its to no purpose. I will tell you

the state of his health without the least exaggeration, had from his wife who is in the greatest trouble and affliction about him, he keeps his bed till 4 in the Afternoon for these last ten days, has not taken an ounce of solid food, trembling and quite forgetful of any subject he hears an hour before. The tenants and other people are continually calling upon him about business and he does not know a word as soon as they turn their back what they have been saying to him. Margaret is as much present as she can if they will let her. their boy surprizingly careful about everything relating to you. . . . The rest of the servants all diligent, the place looks charmingly pleasant. Your cousins admire it vastly tho' our travels are not far from home . . . I find they correspond with their great ones having a letter from Lady Margaret by yesterday's post. It gives me much satisfaction to be of service to you in time to come you and a certain person. . . ."

The Étui, or Twee as Dorothy here spells it, is described by her as follows (it is still at Erthig). "I have a pretty toy for a Certain lady that I think will do with a little new fitting up, a bloodstone Twee set in gold cost me a little before I married 21 guineas. The first year I came to Erthig a visit from that nasty family of the Grosvenors deprived me of a fluted pencil-case, gold, and pencil and pen one side, the other pencil with a small diamond at one end to write. Miss Grosvenor when a little girl lost it for me and her mother never took notice of it, a pair of nippers is also wanted, the hinge a little loose : All these may easily be set right at any of the great toy-men such as Nash, and a neat shagreen case made for it to be worn in the pocket. When these things are done I beg to pay for them and

present it where I shall be much pleased to shew my respect and approbation."

"*May* 19, 1769.

"My dear,

"Your letter today is a vast relief to my mind, you have so spoiled me I was unhappy at your missing 2 posts, you may depend on my diligence on your affairs. Jacky Caesar is a very careful Lad and for one so very young transacts business very well, your good nature and tenderness I much admire to his poor father, but if you will take my advice I would by no means give this boy any salary whilst he is his father's deputy you can at any time reward him as he deserves, your taken up with him instead of old Caesar is certainly a favour and I know will be looked on as such and tho this is my advice yet I am as much in their interest as any friend they have. I have made Margeret a small present for the late trouble I have given her. I believe a better woman does not live in her station than herself. I will keep your letter to Caesar by me till I hear from you again. I wish'd for your answer as to John Coachman's boy lest he should miss the place at the Gardeners as he tells me he only wants your consent and approbation as you used to order him to stick strictly to school. Your sword knot been finished these ten days and waiting for gloves, sets out by the Fly on Thursday with a set of common ruffles which your sister begs your acceptance of. What determination about the horse for Mrs. Yorke, Mr. Edwards of the Eagles persuaded the Caesars not by any means to send it by the Waggoners. . . .

"I lay down my pen to walk to Caesars that I may relate to you exactly how he is something better taking medicines by Dr Weaver's order and to have a blister in a few days whch the Doctor thinks will be of service to his head, he is not at present able to write so I encouraged Jacky to do it and promised to put it into my cover."

"My Dear, "*May* 22, 1769.

"I hope not to incur your displeasure any further than this post. We are now packing off as fast as we can for Erthig, hope to be there the beginning of next week, am almost glad we have not been here the last, it having been so cold. I find much satisfaction for Your kind treatment of me more especially as Your actions show me You have the disposition of Your good father which will make your self and those belonging to you ever happy: I rejoice with You that you have now prospects of settling so much to your own wish and desire in so very material affar in life. I am vastly glad poor James [ ] are a little abated tho' I am not fearful of being in his Neighbourhood. I think we are greatly obliged to Mr and Mrs Wymondesold as their house was a great convenience for a few weeks on our first coming to town. I think this place has been of some service to yr sister as to her learning and Carriage, we have received great civility from the best behaved people here. I hope I have returned them. Your friend, old Sir —— is amongst this number for civility he seems pritty well and desires his best respects.

"Mr R offered me his chaise but I hired a pair of horses for my own and Anne and Betty Ratcliffe and I travel very comfortably together [ ] I have had many good things out of your garden and several pigions, I hope you got the peafowl sweet [ ] I am very glad you spend so much time at a certain house. Your sister is very happy with your letter this morning we hope the books you mention will be very soon at Erthig. How goes on Sam Jones. I like my little boy very much. . . ."

"*May* 28, 1769.

"Your letter I received yesterday morning at Mr. Thomas Barnstons where I have been from the Tuesday

to settle your Cousens at their Lodgins at Deeside. We dined the first day at Mr Lloyds Mr and Mrs Barnston wou'd have Miss Jones dine with them 3 days following so I know not how they will fare at their Boarding house as to table, they are at a Quakers and the cleanest house I have ever see I do assure You I have taken vast pains about those Ladys, they have a very civil and obliging behaviour, sure their great Cosin and Brother will add their kindness in some shape, they have been used to every Convenience and Comfort and expect that everywhere; not to be had in this world, without great Considerations and they fancy in this part we have our provisions for little. I never knew them so Dear. I have killed but one of your Muttons since you left, but poor; sheep go high I am told. I think my dear you do not take time to read my letters, the question asked You, about my Coachman's boy is this, do you approve of his being bound to Mr Gerry Gardner at Chester for 5 years or not and as to taken him at present into Yours I would not do it on any account. He is not Cleaver and I know John Jones does not like him and I am certain it would be a ready way to spoil Charles who is now good and I do not believe that of the other . . ."

"*May* 30, 1769.

"My dear,

"Your letter was never more welcome than today, You gave me such a description of yourself in your last that I have been quite uneasy. I hope you was entirely free from any feaverish disorder before the Richmond tour. I can fancy you in a bargeful of Ladys musick &ct. I am just come off duty from a ride from the Kings Mill. Eleven hands at work, 4 of them bricklayers, they tell me good ones. I am certain Hugh Stevens is a very honest industrious man, they have got as far as within six foot of the first floor, it seems vastly well done and a

Charming foundation. I do all I can to spirit Jacky Caesar up that there be no delay ; which was very much the fault of poor Caesar and for fear of the Cost hardly ever finishd anything, he is much the same in health as when I wrote. I can't help laughing at your care of Blacky, any Lodging safe and Comfortable after your Wood house and a bed of straw which he chuses when at work here. I believe he never goes out or returns from a Journey sober. However, he is a safe chap. Pray answer my questions I asked you in my last letter or you will discourage me from doing the little service in my power. the Myddletons dined with me today, on mentioning their money they sayd they shou'd be glad of it and thought to send to Caesar. I stopt that, and if you please will pay them Betty Ratcliffe says nothing of hers. Your sister's kind love with mine attend you. We are both, I thank God, well, she perfectly so. Poor Betty Ratcliffe low, her mother in a very declining way, puts me in fear of loosing Betty, sad stroke that will be. . . ."

"Thurlowe,
"*April the 9th*, 1769.

"My dear Philip,

"If I had not compassion for your crazyness, I shou'd blame you for your unreasonableness. While I am going from Ilchester to Bath, from Bath to Oxford, from Oxford to London, from London to Huntingdon, and from Huntingdon to this place (pretty sufficient employment for a fortnight) you are in earnest expectation of hearing from me every post, and mightily disapointed at not having constant accounts from me of the health of one who for the greatest part of the time is 150 miles distant from me. You lovers have really more need of secretaries than First-Ministers of State. Now am I writing to you for the third time within the space

of little more than a week, and about what ? Nothing. Well ! I am amazed, as often as I think of the number of letters which I have wrote upon that same subject ; however the looking back upon the ground one has pass'd gives one comfort and spirit to go on. And what have I to say to you, now that I am pen in hand ? Why, that we went a *party quarèe* (my Father and his three branches) to Lord Clare's at Gosfield in Essex last Wednesday, the day on which Dr. Kelly was married, and what have you to do with that, you cou'd not be of the party, neither have you any thing to do *with matrimony*. The next day we three went to Newmarket, what is that to you ? Yes, but it is, for it very well introduces a reproof from me to you, for directing your letters so undistinctly, that they often go the wrong road, and get there, instead of coming to Horseheath ; by which means I had perhaps lost the last but one, which you directed to me, if while we were upon the course on Thursday, I had not sent to the town to enquire after letters. The servant brought it to me, and a pretty querulous companion I had in it complaining dreadfully that you had not received a letter from me of three or four days. On Wednesday we go to Town, and then if you advance as far as Chester, as I suppose you will, when I am within an everyday post of you, what may I not expect from you, and what will not you expect from me ? You have never once consider'd how much the assizes have given you the advantage of me in epistolary matter : but without the Acton and the Plas-Power ladies, and sweet Nanny of Brynny-Funnen I dont wonder that poor Birch went to bed sick and melancholy, if you had not danc'd with a bride you wou'd have done so too. But I hope that bleeding and vomiting brought poor Tom soon about again. I met Tom Temple upon New-Market heath, your agreable fellow-traveller for a part of your last journey into Wales ; I have no chance of being your rival

in his friendship, for I find I am upon one of the last leaves of his book, for not calling upon him when I last came thro' Cambridge, so that you will have a still greater share of his company when he next comes to town than you us'd to have since I shall have a less. Our letters as well as the papers I think are fill'd with little else but Wilkes and Liberty, except indeed one that I received from my Grandmother, which brought me a good account of my uncle Frank's being employ'd a whole morning in the business of pounding an estray ass; of which ass in conjunction with Lord William Manners and the late Speaker of the house of Commons you may possible hear a good deal in Westminster hall, if it shou'd not be owned. The papers tell us that the Duke of Rutland is dead, we have heard nothing of it by letter, nor cou'd we have the news from Lincolnshire 'till by to-morrow's post. Thus far I wrote last night, and this morning (Sunday) I have neither time nor matter for anything more than the conclusion; therefore set your mind at rest 'till you hear from me again, and be assur'd that at the departure of this letter she is in perfect health, and nobody upon earth more likely to continue so. I hope you can say the same of Mrs. Yorke and Miss Ann, and of our contemporary to all whom I beg my best compliments and

"I am, my dear Philip,

"Your very sincere and affect: friend,

"BROWNLOWE CUST.

"Remember me with my best wishes to Tom Birch."

"Thurlow,

"*June the 15th*, 1769. *Thursday.*

"MY DEAR PHILIP,

"You and I have been of late so much together that my pen has pretty well recover'd the fatigue of our

last separation and therefore I cant do better than exercise it a little to shew you that I can sometimes give over measure, and not content myself with merely answering your letters, (tho' that when we have a regular post between us is pretty good employment) I write this the day before we leave this place designing to carry it with me and to leave it at Cambridge as we go through to-morrow : for I imagine it will be no unwelcome thing when you arrive in Town from Lockinge to be met by good news of our coach's contents. We travel to-morrow to the Wheat-Sheaf and the next day drink tea at Grantham. It has occur'd to me to-day that it may be more convenient to you to come in Post-Chaises than by the Post-Coach even tho' you should come on Monday as your time wou'd be more your own : and that you wou'd not object to bringing down Meyres in the chaise with you as *your Valet*, and if so, what it wou'd have cost you to have travel'd down upon your present plan, and what it wou'd have cost me to have Meyres down by the fly will I daresay go near to be equal to the expence of the Post-Chaise. If this shou'd be agreable to you you must let Meyres know your time of setting out as soon as you receive this, as he does not at present think of setting out before Monday morning 3 o'clock : and I question much whether he will be ready to set out much earlier. However you must make him suit himself to your time. I think this method of travelling will not only be more convenient to you but more creditable also than to be one of the many contents of a Fly. If Cass. was within reach of you he wou'd describe to you the inside of that vehicle in summer time, he wou'd tell you that it wou'd very well answer the purpose of an emmetic to you, if you shou'd think proper to undergo that discipline before the feasting of Grantham races. I wish therefore I had thought of this plan before, as it might have been more easily settled ; but I think it is not now

too late if you are but expeditious in sending to Meyres, and do but give him all the time you can : except indeed you shou'd be set off before this reaches you in order to be with us on Sunday ; if so you will have been at a little more expence for the carriage of your person, but then it will be for a few hours more of the company of one whom you cannot either see or know too much of. Come when you will we shall all rejoyce to see you in that believe

"Your affectionate
"BROWNLOWE CUST.

"If you have any leisure give me one of your scralls by Saturday's post to tell me how and when you come."

"Thurlow,
"*June the 30th*, 1769.

"MY DEAR FRIEND PHILIP,

"I foresaw the possibility of my receiving a letter from you before I cou'd write one to you, I was aware also that under the present circumstances there was but little doubt that you wou'd make use of that possibility, thus I was not surprised at receiving your letter yesterday ; but I was, what I never experienced before, sorry for it, because I had meditated to shew you, that I had not forgot your letter to me at Grantham : and imagin'd that an answer to it from here wou'd be *as* acceptable to you as one from me, *isolated as I was*, at Grantham cou'd have been. You cou'd not doubt of our having a good Journey hither depending upon it that your Stars join'd to ours wou'd take care of us : and much obliged to them indeed we were for one of the finest travelling days that ever was, we had not a single complaint to make either of heat or cold or of dust or rain : we had all our meals comfortably not forgetting, you may be sure, our tea in the afternoon ; and reached this place half an hour

before it was dark. Yesterday morning we three (dont you think four is a better number) had a delightful walk in Mr Soame's walks which are about a mile from us here; they are really pretty without any variety of ground, which you may be certain is not unpleasing to me as a pattern for what may be done in Belton gardens: this morning we took a long walk before breakfast, and we have been one still longer since tea this afternoon, from which you see that we make the most of good weather in the country. We expect it will produce exceedingly good looks for Grantham races. A propos to those races, I must tell you that it occur'd to me, after you was gone on Wednesday night as soon as I was a little relieved from the thinking necessary upon packing my Dover trunks that you had some plan for coming down to us on Sunday; now I desire if you have one not to balk your inclination by witholding a hearty invitation from you, for be assured I shall be extremely glad to receive you after a Sabbath day's journey. I only think your former plan was best because of the economy of the fly, and as a few hours can not possibly make any difference even to *a lover*, if he be without a *rival*. Let me however know when to expect you, and if you come per fly, I will send either a carriage or horses to take you out of it to Colesworth.

"Having several letters to write by this post, I can at present say no more but that we are well and shall be glad to meet you in Lincolnshire. My best compliments to Mr and Mrs. Wymondesold and Miss Poles. Remember me to Lloyd, and believe me to be, Dear Philip,

"Your most affectionate friend
"*to serve you*
"Brownlowe Cust."

DOROTHY YORKE *to her son*

"*June 6, 1769.*

"MY DEAR,

"According to your orders Whiskey went to Chester to Mr Brown's with written directions and a Charge to get it done by the time you mention, it let down William who tells me with a dismal face he walked most of the way to Chester. On Saturday I sent my Howdee to Chirk Castle and Glenne which brought Mr Edwards that evening to Offer himself to do you any service, as he had not before heard of Caesar's indisposition. I asked his advice about your workmen's wages, Henshaw and David Jones, he assures me that if you part with them; you will have none under 12 pence a day. John Jones in a vast bustle lest he should lose them out of the garden especially Hendrew who takes care of the Engine and new ones he says must have a vast deal of Direction from him before they can be of any use in gardens. He tells me Jack Hendrew has found out the breech in the cistern in one of the brick sides; would it were in my power to mend it but even more necessary things about this house have been long neglected; Caesar always veryfied an old saying 'penny wise and pound foolish.' I am glad you have wrote to Mr Vernon to give a look at the Kings Mill.

"Your corn in the barn smelling of rats and mice. I have had threshed out by Edward Jones an unseasonable time for it certainly. I preach to young Caesar to have all works done in proper season but I hope my dear, when you settle here you may meet with a person by way of house steward to see your workmen set out each day on their various employments. . . . ."

"*Jun.* 11, '69.

"Methinks my dear, I am glad you take a mouth full of air and quiet, it must be a great rest to all London

Ladys and Gentlemen, if the invalid at Winchmore hill will allow you a furlough, you could not employ it better than to peep at your own mansion. I think your mill goes on very well. . . .

"Your Whisky sett out Mr Brown promisfes it by your time, at present William is ill. I hope he will be able as he may be sick for want of work (an indolent soul indeed) if not I will send your Whisky by some other hand. I have agreed with your 2 workmen in the garden for 12d a day till after Harvest, pay them now as from myself as I inform them you are not willing to give those rates. I shou'd think all the gentlemen shou'd give one certain pay, what this is I cannot well find out. Most I ask says 12d. I here enclose you young Caesar's accounts, likewise the humble petition of Thomas Davies if whom you can serve I am sure you will, a better action or more proper subject can never offer itself to Mr Wymondesold's benevolence. . . .

"Wou'd you have the Dog Mr Roberts gave your sister for you sent to school the time J. Jones says is now and a fine puppy. Poor Flirt is troubled with convulsion fits, has had 3. Caesar seems better in health, very little in memory. John Coachmans man has bound his son to Gerry last Friday. Mr. Robert of Sontly gone to Dublin for a month General Warburton and lady and fine Miss Down likewise arrived last night, Nedy Yale and new wife the Butals also as I told you. Mr Byat has taken Trevalyn for 3 years—Madame and Sir going from thence this week."

"*June* 16, 1769.

"Dear Phil,

"I thank you for your letter today, sorry I am grieved that such a poor sick Creature as my brother should ramble from place to place but hope he has proper people to take care of him. I think you cant wholly

depend on [ ] punctuality about him he never writes when it would be of use. I am quite uneasy you have not received the gloves, vexed I have pay'd never thoughts but they had been long got to you, have written sharp to the old man today about them and to know how and where he did send them I begun thus far on friday but all the flood of the Yales came and took most part of the afternoon and evening. I must say they brought a young Gentleman whose name is Hills, he belongs to Lincolns inn, quite a fine man and heir to a prodigious fortune, Neddy Yale says. I had likewise a visitor in Mr Humphrys from Ruthven who I told Edward I should be vastly glad wou'd take a peep at ye Kings Mill, he gives comfort in liking the place and observes a great deal to be done for the time. They go on as well as he thinks one Wheel may work in six weeks. I send you a letter of Edwards to peruse. Poor Blacky has not had so good a lodging as you provided in town for him. Mr. Yale ordered him to the Bridewell in Wrexham lastly, not so cool as your Wood house which he constantly when at work here occupied indeed the best Creatur for that place. I am glad to hear all your Dear friends are well, pray make my Compliments. We long to hear from Mr Wymondsold would to God he would do some kind action to poor E Davies. We have here quite affecting accounts of Lady H. Williams admired by every creature that has seen and knows her. Your sister joines me in kind love to you. . . ."

" *Sunday evening. June* 18, 1769.

" Just come from Place Powr where I made mine, your Sisters and Bettys Asylum from William's Burial of whose death I have wrote by John Jones.

" I hear he set out at noon from Chester with the whiskey. I hope you will see him there. I left Mr

Lloyd very Complaining. I hope only the gravel, very civil they were to us indeed. I invited myself and found great benefit from my viset, spirits fluttered and would have been sunk had I not gone. Mr Lloyd tells me he gives all his workmen 12d pr day, none here can have under nor any Gentleman in the Country. I do not understand in respect to your Wheelwright, is it in his power to get more pay than he ought I will read to the Caesars what you say. I shall think of my visit to Lockinge when I set out on for Bath in the Autumn, one Journey was quite enough, was done in pursuit of health. I shou'd not take that. I thank God I continue pritty well as are all at Erthig at present. Richard Mr Lloyd's Foot man's brother offers himself as groom, has lived at Clennarth and Mrs Pulestons recomendation My answer I cou'd not chuse and sent for you but will tell you who offers poor William died the death of a welch man immoderately he drank, buried at Gresford about 40 horse here and 30 more met him at Gresford I found meat and drink. Mrs Warrington and Babe are well. Make me civil and polite if you think proper to your dear friends."

"*June* 25, 1769.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I have done a very rash thing, I am sure, I dare not shew my face to my Uncle, if he knew it. It is no less than bespeaking a Harpsichord which I did the last time Mr Gerard was with me, as he said I should never make any Progress in Musick on the Spinnet, and he said besides that it was very apt to drive one awry, as a spinnet is not so straight as a harpsichord. I expect it down in about three months. I hope you will not think me too hasty in sending for it now, but all the reasons I have given consider'd together, I thought it was best to send for it immediately. It would make us exceedingly happy

to see you at Erthigg. I hope we shall have that pleasure very soon.

"I am, dear Brother,
Your affectionate Sister,
"A. J. YORKE.

MRS YORKE *Dr to* JACOB KIRKMAN

Sept ye 13th, 1769

	£	s	d
To a single Key'd Harpsichord with two Unisons & Octave Stops with pedal 32 Gs	33	12	
To a large Desk for D^r	1	11	6
To a leather Cov^r for D^r	1	1	6
To a packing Case for D^r		15	
	37	0	0

Paid

"Erthig,
"*Sunday, June* 25, 1769.

"MY DEAR,

"I was agreably surprised by John Jones's return this morning, as I look on his great spirit as a guard to this great mansion, very thinly inhabited by men, only little Charles in the house. You will think I vary vastly in my want of money. I shall now really be very glad of what you can spare, I am constantly obliged to advance sums of money to the Caesar's where there is much more call for it, than they can or do receive, they beg very hard you will trust them with a sum that will last—they will take equal pains to get in your arrears, those are now dedicated to the payment of a few hands the greatest debtor Mrs. Devanport and she promises fair; talks of selling her Cheese at 36 pr 11^d soon, truly sorry I am you cannot give a peep at this place instead of a Comfort in your poor Uncle as I once flattered myself he is a perfect Scourge to us. I pray God Convert him from his wicked

ways. I am unsettled as to my movements, sometimes I think myself quite forlorn in this Charming place then I hate the thoughts of travelling at least in the expensive way I did before. Bath I know will be proper for myself so in Autumn I will strive to get there. I thank God I am now free from complaints than on first coming from thence. I may venture to say for the workmen at yr Kings-mill they do their duty by you the fault must be in ye mill right. I fear Mr Vernon discourages you more than he need. I hope he will not do so by them when he comes again. Mrs Davies and the Myddltons charges me to return you a thousand thanks for your kind intentions towards Tommy Davies, beg, to know what college to send him to. I hope my dear, you are well after all yr race bustles I rejoice with you to hear your dear friends you are with are so and that the family at Lockinge are in health. I am certain they are very kind and obliging to you. Mrs G. Warrington, and his little Boy go on charmingly, the old Gentleman meaning the baby's father has beautified your barn as a Chapple looks really pretty from your gallery window. Mr. Newcome I find benefits from his uncle Bishop St. Asaph's death. Excuse this scrawl from dear Phil,

"Your affectionate

"MOTHER.

"Your sister is telling a grand secret. I fear I must know it to my cost at last, she is excessively fond of musick and comes on exceedingly, cannot deny her anything that employs her so well, not a word of this. I daresay you will not mention to our Master James H . . ."

"*July* 11, 1769.

"Indeed my Dear I have been in a sad panick at not hearing from You so long and believe I should have been quite sick if I had not had a letter this morning, since

I heard from you opened two directed to you, one from Salop dated June 17 with notice of a cask of styer Cyder in bottles which are come very safe from a Mr. Edward Prichard no bill with this, the other from Mrs Charles Yorke about the Mare likely you may Chuse to sell her in London a good Scheme I think if she would not do for yourself as Scrowgys Eldest daughter is a fine Colt and a little one coming on a pace. Your live stock well except poor Flirt who has been for many weeks—mad—with dreadful fits now gone out of her pain which she was not likely to loose. I have by Mr J. Edwards help sent the young dog. Mr Roberts Roger gave us to [ ] school. Rover lives altogether at Plasgronow. Mr Warrington doats on him they and darling are well, they have smartened up the place vastly by converting the Barn into a Chapple. Mr Simpson returned and a great assembling to Plas Grownow, there is, the Child to be christened next Wednesday. I have turned nurse to little Newcome in the absence of her father she was with us near a week. Caesar has been bathing at Flint, his spirits seem mended for it but I have now all my discourses with the Lad who for his age and experience is very cleaver and diligent. Your hay grass is began today. I shall be almost ready if I see it Loiter to go into it. I send all your [ ] also, I wish Mr Vernon had let me see him after he viewed the Kings Mills. I am sadly at variance with old Madam at the french, mills they have cheated me sadly lately in our Meal. I suspect Tammerland as well as her Ladyship. I have the honour to pay for your orders £7 15*s.* 3*d.* to Davies Glover at Chester one £1 10*s.* for Lady Cust's total £9 5*s.* 3*d.* I here enclose all the receits and bills except your latter article which I pd in one of mine. Your man William's wages, and other bills I discharge whenever I meet with them and set them down to your account against money coming in. Mrs. Davies and daughter are now with

me whilst her son spends his holidays at Mr Ben Lloyds, she is vastly thankful to you and sends her best respects, the little sister flown to Leicestershire amongst the [ ] of the Browns etc. What an astonishing creature is my poor Brother, pray what sort of humour is he now in towards you. I fancy he does not now think of us at all. My Compliments where due, your sisters kind love with mine.

" I am, dear Philip, Your affectionate
" MOTHER.

" P.S. The Roberts are down, a very pritty young Lady a Miss Pattison with them, violented affected, have you seen her, a merchant's daughter they say. I hear today Mr Humberston is very ill of a fever. I am exceedingly sorry to hear. Your old friend Mr Lloyd keeps constant to Wrexham Green and so complaisant most times to send a howdee here."

" *July* 20, 1769.

" MY DEAR,

" Your letters are a great Consolation to me in Your Absence. I am much obliged to you for hearing from you today. I am very sorry you gave yourself a fatigue sooner than you need. Caesar is but a silly old man I think and not to be always minded. I hope your visit to Tittenhanger may prove serviceable as to the *Cole* affair and then it will answer your going so soon. I find your Uncle has had old Dawson's advice who hastened him to Newnham where his servants say he is much better than in town. John Caesar tells me all the slates of your mill was brought last Friday 23 carters dined in your Servants hall near 50 men with Carters and I endeavoured to please them with plum pudden and beef sufficient, with your strong beer and ale, most went away in decent time to those who stay'd till ten ; I sent

word I always had my doors shut at that hour and they went quickly away. I do assure they oblig'd much readyer than many of his Majesty's subjects. How does poor Sam, we beg he will go with our service to Miss Mary Liel that she shall let him know where he shall find the shoemaker to pay for 2 pr Anne has had, and get a pattern shoe sent to him a green satten the fellow of it she has at home, to Mr Windcate shoemaker to hasten her stay down to Erthig. We have vast business against our going into Berkshire, no more at present as Country folk say being half asleep intended to have wrote this afternoon cou'd not from a shocking long visit from Apperly and Sister. I have not any news for you but poor Parson Lloyd coming with great expedition to see you on the Wednesday you went from hence and poor Mrs —— begins moeving No letters for you

"I thank God we are all well even Caesar is riding as usual."

"*Tuesday, Sept.* 5, 1769.

"I must tells tales of Roberts as he wants to monopolise the game in your grounds he is sending to J. Jones to keep at a distance from his feilds and was in a violent passion on meeting Thomas Davies a quarter of a mile from his house, sayd he walked over his standing Corn and that on pretence of shooting. the noble Captain Hutcheson was for shooting the dog. I have just sent them to seek for game in your farms about—to show him that tho' you are not here we are not affrighted at his nonsense. I intend to set out for Lockinge on the 18 of the month. I know not what day I shall be there or as yet, how I shall travel. Please to say when you write I may be with them the latter end of Sept. I enclose a letter came to you from thence and another from Mr Hicks 3 large packets directed by me to Mr De Grey. I think had better lye here till he comes. Mr

and Mrs Lally has been with me 4 days, we was very comfortable together. Mr. Gerrard acquaintes me that Anne's harpsichord arrives next week. I find I may have credit till November for it from Mr. Kirkman an old Sir worth £40 thousand. Your wheat is very fine and got in. Caesar I am sure is better but chuses his son shou'd officiate at Erthig for him and I believe it is as well. Your new mill has got Jenny a husband, one I am told from Malpas, a mighty frisky widow she has been, they puff off for this man as to Circumstances and sobriety, surprising as the woman has 4 Children. This match took place in a few days acquaintance and her relations knew nothing of it, his name is George Bates. I have paid my respects to Mr and Mrs Fitzhugh, they are all well. I am sorry to read in the paper Lady Margaret Hitchcocks death. I hope it is not true. I must not omit informing you Justice Yale has lately received 3 incendiary letters and threats to take his life if he does not leave Justice business, a vast bustle he is in and much discourse it makes. You need not lament your fruit this summer the worst I ever see, few peaches, bad nectarines, swarms of wasps on everything. We have great plenty of greengages which they eat fast. . . . . "

" *Sept.* 28, '69.

" My dear Philip,

" I received yours enclosed to your Mother and am much obliged to you for your kind Composition, though at the same time I can assure you that in affairs of moment, my Pleasure should by no means stand in competition with your convenience and advantage, nor would I on any account have put you off at all, had I not been assured that a few days could not break any Squares. It is true, notwithstanding I wish you so well that I am as you express it drawn from Lockhing, I cannot but

leave my Dear Friends your Mother and Sister whom I have not seen so long with Reluctance, as I know not when I shall be so happy as to see them again. In short, although you may think it unreasonable I am come to a determination by advice of all my good Friends here, not to take Belton in my way, for Mr Shepherd says, that the Cross Roads from Northampton must be exceedingly bad, besides I could not make use of your Horses, for I should not be able to convey my Trunk by them. My Scheme then is this. As you are so good as to stay contentedly at Belton till Monday the 9th of October, I will do the same here, then let us both start and do you be so kind as to write immediately by return of the Post and fix upon Litchfield or any other town which you like and which lies in the Road and a practicable distance from each of us. Be clear as to your proceedings, when you fix upon the Town at which we are to meet, name the Inne, let me know when (if not on the 9th of Oct.) you set out from Belton and at what time you reckon to be at the Town agreed upon and I will endeavour to meet you exactly, though I think it were better for either of us to stay a day on the Road for the other than not meet. Your Mother desired I would tell you that she intended going for Bath on the 16th of Octobr, but I shall carry this up to her room and if she has anything more to say to you she can insert it. Do pray write immediately for you know I cannot stir till I hear from you. In the meanwhile I desire you will make me civil (it seems that is the pretty Phrase) to all at Belton and beleive me to be what I really am at all times and seasons,

" Most affectionately Yours
" Thomas Birch.

" Lockinge,
" *Sept.* 28, 1769."

BROWNLOWE CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Paris,

"*Wednesday night, Oct. the* 18*th*, 1769,

"MY DEAR FRIEND PHILIP,

"Many thanks to you for your letter of the 8th. Inst. from Belton; after rather a longer fast than usual, I made a luxurious feast upon two large packets from Belton, one from you, the other from my Father, Mother, and a lady whose Christian name is Elizabeth. I have just finished a letter to Belton, and it is now late at night, therefore I have not time for a long scrall to you by this post, but as I shall be at Fontainbleau the next post day to England, I take the opportunity of this to acquaint you with our intended motions; next Friday or Saturday se'nnight we design to leave this place, and as we stay at Lisle a day, it will be Saturday or Sunday fortnight when we arrive in London. If I find you there, I shall shew you how much pleasure I have in renewing the old subject, and I am happy in thinking that it will be but a short time before we shall have a conversation, for that alone is equal to the consideration you mention, for a letter is much too confined for it, and it certainly merits, calls for mature deliberation. I am very glad to find you have mixed so much of the sweet with the bitter this summer, and I think it will be no news to you to tell you from Paris that you have been a welcome guest at Belton. If you meet me in London, we will go down thither together, except they shoud be on the point of coming to town. I shall be at Pere's while I am in London, but that will not be many hours, if I go into Lincolnshire. You also will, I am sure, be welcome to a bed there, if you shou'd think with me that it will be more convenient than Carpue's.

"I will certainly remember your commissions. I have just executed one which you gave me for yourself in the

purchase of a sword for five guineas, and if you don't like it, I will take it myself; the other two shall be done as soon as I come from Fontainbleau. It is so late that I can add no more but my best respects to Mrs and Miss Yorke, when you write to Bath. I am extremely glad to hear that Mrs Yorke's journey thither is only a preventative.

"Grimes and Ryder desire to be remembered to you, and I am, my dear Philip,

"your most affectionate and hearty friend,

"BROWNLOWE CUST."

"Cloak Lane,

"*November the 9th*, 1769. *Thursday.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND PHILIP,

"I thank you heartily for your letter to me which was readdy here to meet me had I not been detained by the despotic power of the winds for three days longer in a despotic country than I design'd. The high winds on Saturday and Sunday last were so favorable for vessels coming from Calais to Dover, that they blew directly into Dover Harbour and would suffer no vessel to come out of it. We therefore during two days in vain hoped for our ship which we had order'd to come from Dover to meet us at Calais, but on Sunday the wind abated and in some degree changed, which enabled our ship to be with us on Monday; that evening therefore we set sail from Calais and had a passage in the night, the whole of which was spent on board, and most of it by many of my fellow sailers in sickness. Grimes was very bad, but I was stout, and after once joining for a quarter of an hour in the chorus fell asleep, and waked not till we were safe in the Downs, the winds blew us there instead of to Dover, and we arrived off Deal about two in the morning. As soon as it was light we landed, and after passing an examination of the Custom House officers without any losses we set off on our journey, lay at Rochester on Tuesday night,

and I got here about noon the next day. The expectation of a joyful meeting with all my friends made my Journey uncommonly pleasant, and I was not in the smallest degree prepared for the melancholy news of my Aunt Cust's death, not having had the least intimation that she was in a dangerous illness, indeed it was not possible that I shou'd have it, for nobody of the family had any idea of it 'till the Counsellor went to see her upon his arrival in town ; He found that she had been growing thin and weak for a fortnight before, and was so much shocked with her looks, that he desired her to send for Dr. Baker directly, she did so but the Doctor cou'd be of no service, for a very hasty consumption was too far advanc'd for any medicine and on Monday morning, she expired with great resignation. I am sure your humanity will make you sympathize with us, for the thoughts of having parted for ever so unexpectedly with a near and affectionate relation cannot but affect us sensibly with concern, notwithstanding one must consider that it is a great release for her, whose health was such as not to give her hopes of much enjoyment of this world : this consolation is left to her relations however, that she lived so innocently in the world, and went with such Christian resignation of it that one may reasonably hope for her enjoyment of another. I will dwell no longer upon dismals, but will leave them to talk to you of one who is most dear to you as well as to me. One who set off today with the rest of the family from Belton, on their road to this City ; my Father and Mother will out run the young ones, and be in town to-morrow but the coach will not arrive 'till Saturday. You may be sure I have no small happiness in the expectation of meeting them after an absence in a foreign country. They often occupied my thoughts during that, and I was not unmindful of them in the execution of your commission, which I have executed as well as I cou'd, tho' not quite to my mind,

because I believe you wished to have had trinkets; but finding that almost at every shop of the infinite number at which I enquired that the trinkets they showed me were mostly from Sheffield and Birmingham; I listen'd to the advice of some very good English people whom I met at Paris, and dealt with a cheating old woman, who abated half what she had asked tho' she had sworn she wou'd not sink a farthen in her prices, and bought a muff and tippet made of the skin of birds from the Lake of Geneva, and other things which I think will be acceptable but which I must tell you by another opportunity for Pere. calls me to supper desiring me to give his kind complements to you.

"I am, my dear Philip,

"Your very affectionate and sincere friend,

"BROWNLOWE CUST."

"Downing Street,

"*November the 16th*, 1769.

"MY DEAR FRIEND PHILIP,

"Tho' I did not write to you by the last post I have not I assure you been unmindful of you, for I have siezed more than one opportunity of talking with my Father upon the subject of your's to me at Paris. I found him extremely ready to converse upon it, and that it was a matter which he had very frequently consider'd. He is of opinion that it ought to proceed, and will be very happy to do every thing in his power to advance it: the difficulty matter to manage in it arises from your Uncle; but on his account too it ought to proceed as the time mention'd originally by my Father as proper for the final consideration of this matter is now advancing: it is you know in February next that my Sister comes of age; that will enable Him in conjunction with us all to correct the Family settlements, and to secure to my Sisters the fortunes He at present designs Them in lieu of those which They are entitled to by the Marriage

settlement. By this your Uncle may see my Sister's fortune secured to Her upon parchment. That will stifle surely all his doubts upon that head, and in order to correct his suspicions of your design to wait for his shoes, my Father and I think it wou'd be very proper for you as soon as you come to Town to mention the thing to Him again openly and at large, and to tell him as a reason for so doing that the affair is now going to proceed, and that We as well as you desire to act openly and with dignity. But when you come to Town we will have a thorough deliberation upon it. I was desirous of delivering your letter which came enclosed to my Sister with my own hands to Carpue ; for it furnished me with an opportunity of getting some intelligence for you from Grosvenor Gate. The noble knight arrived there from Winchmore Hill last Monday se'nnight, not without his Dulcinea. . . . I am apt to think his strength will be exhausted before his purse ; and if so the moveables and Terra firma may remain in his own disposal to the last ; but, as in Him extraordinary things have often occur'd, He may live to be lewd a long time yet, and therefore I think you will do wisely to present yourself to Him as soon as you have settled your affairs in Wales.

" We are all very well here, and often have you in our thoughts and conversation. My Sister reads your letters not without being very sensible that they convey to her the language of true affection and desires me to thank you for them. The correspondence was in an odd way before while I received the Love Letters ; it is not in one less so now, for she receives them and I answer them. Be it as it will, I am very well satisfied ; make what use of me you will, so as it is to promote in this affair your happiness and that of my Sister. They all desir'd to be kindly remember'd to you and do not forget me or any of us to T. Birch, I hope he is in the same health and

spirits as he usually enjoys. How does our Contemporary ? I hope he sometimes makes a jolly Trio of you.

" I am, My dear Philip,

" Your most affectionately

" Brownlowe Cust."

" Downing Street,

" *Nov. 20th*, 1769.

" Miss Cust and Miss Elizabeth Cust are exceedingly obliged to Mr York for his late attention and obliging remembrance of them, they were desirous of hanseling their handsome Presents before they beg'd Mr Yorke's acceptance of their very best thanks for them. Mr Yorke knows he depend'd upon a Person who would execute his orders entirely to the Miss Custs satisfaction, and they can assure him the Purchases are well chosen of a very elegant taste.

" All the family join with Miss Cust and Miss Elizabeth Cust in best compliments to Mr Yorke."

" Downing Street,

" *Nov. the 21st*, '69. *Tuesday.*

" My dear friend Philip,

" I returned from Mr. Evelyn's yesterday just before your letter arrived, and I sent the one enclosed in it from Birch to the Penny-Post immediately. As I am going to-night to sup in the city with some of Pere's *abstemious* acquaintance I cannot thus amuse myself so long as I cou'd wish ; however I was unwilling to let the enclosed go in a cover from me without giving you a few words into the bargain, tho' at the same time I know that they will be thrown on one side 'till the other has been thoroughly perused. Last night we of this house chaperon'd by Mrs. Tryon were at the Play to see the Tempest and the Jubilee ; Caliban delighted Miss Evelyn and Miss Kelly, and we liked the Jubilee very

well, but upon the whole the Play was not well performed. Had you been in Town you might perhaps have accepted of a place in our box, for the sake of seeing a representation of the honors done to your friend Shakespear.

" In monsterous haste.

" Yours most affectionate

" Brownlowe Cust."

" Downing Street,

" *November the 23rd*, '69. *Thursday.*

" My dear friend Philip,

" I write to you to-night because on Saturday I shall be at Hucks's, for Grimes and I dine with Him in the Country, and do not design to return before Sunday. I have nothing in particular to tell you of ourselves, except it be something so that we enjoy a comfortable society without interruption; for we have no formal unpleasant visits, and We have but little temptation from amusements to go out. You are mistaken if you think that on this latter account We find the town dull, for my part I think it a most agreable retirement, and extremly welcome after an incessant ramble of four months in a foreign country. I have heard nothing of your Uncle since my late account of him to you, but I have once or twice had more than half an inclination to go and make him a visit, as last year He thought I had been remiss towards Him in not waiting on Him; but the fear of his jealousy has weigh'd heavier than the pleasure *I expected* from a tete a tete with Him, or the making a trio with Him and his fair-one. You have been busied at Erthig in procuring me great satisfaction, for I understand by your letters that the great works of your mills are finished, and that they have turned out as advantageously as you expected; for the great advance in the rent must amply recompence you for the money laid out, tho' I imagine that has exceeded what you first

allotted for it. You may imagine that we often think and talk about you, and that We shall be very glad to have you amongst us, but if you dont come soon, you will find me flown again; for my purpose is to go to Grantham for a fortnight about the 20th of next month; but that dont much signify for I shall soon be at home again, and then we must lay our heads together in order to give you many new connections without quarelling with your old ones at Grosvenor Gate. We should be very glad that you would have some conversation with your Mother about the means of obtaining that, and therefore think you will do very well to wait for her return to Erthig. I heartily hope you will receive Her and your sister in perfect health. I wish there was no obstacle to their taking London in their way home, as all this family wou'd be very happy to have a meeting with them. Mrs. Tryon who is very lately come from Bath was extremely happy with the acquaintance she had made there with your Friends and laments that She was called away so soon after it commenced; her little girl's dangerous illness at School hurried her to Town, but since she came home the child has got much better. You will be glad to hear that we are all here perfectly well; and that includes two ladies who hope you have received their Billet-Doux which last post carried to acknowledge and thank you for their presents from Paris; which have been offer'd and received from you, and been ansel'd by them without your having the least idea what they are. We think therefore it is high time now that you should know that my Sister Elizabeth wears with great pleasure and some elegance a muff and tippet made of the skin of the Grave (a bird upon the lake of Geneva) which is very rare and very expensive in this country, and that my Sister Cust wears a very neat gold watch chain as your presents, which they much esteem; and they commend me for having got for them what is very useful to them.

The Watch chain is very well suited to a present which I made my sister Cust of a Geneva watch. I have forgot to tell you that besides the muff and tippet for my sister Elizabeth there is an Ermine lyning for a cloak which I thought you wou'd approve because it is elegant.

" The Counsellor who has been here to-day desires me to tell you that there will be soon a great outcry for *Counsellor Corke* to argue the cause of the widow Lowe, for the eight Judges have a desire to be thoroughly masters of her case, and therefore 'tis thought they will have three arguments on each side, which as Sir Fletcher has left . . . [torn away]."

" Downing Street,

" *Saturday night. December the 2d*, 1769.

" My dear friend Philip,

" You will not wonder that you have not heard from me by the two last posts neither will you take it amiss that you have by this so short and hasty a scrall, when you learn the great matter with respect to me that has been lately in agitation. I must in confidence communicate to you (for I do not long keep you a stranger to what passes in my mind) that I having made known to my Father my attachment to the eldest Miss Colebrooke desir'd him to make overtures to her Uncle Sir George : they have been accepted by him and have the approbation of all the family : if therefore I can make myself agreable to Miss Colebrooke herself I may probably be a happy man as soon as you. She is gone down into Staffordshire with Sir Thomas Broughton whose Lady is her cousin, and I having an invitation from Sir Thomas shall follow her forthwith, and expect to be there next Thursday night. Direct therefore to me as soon as you can at Sir Thomas Broughton Bart at Broughton near Stone, Staffordshire, for I long to know how great your surprise will be at the contents of this. I must not say more upon it lest I

shoud not have time to tell you that the object of your affections is perfectly well, she and I received your letters yesterday, her's was from a hard-named place in the mountains of an older date by two days than mine from Erthig. I gave Carpue your letter and desir'd him to convey Mr. Hutton's as if it came enclosed to him. He tells me Mr. Hutton grows weaker, and now eats or drinks nothing except a very small quantity of Asses milk; but Birch who has seen him has I suppose given you more perfect information of him. I have not yet been able to get a sight of Birch but am in hopes of seeing him at breakfast to-morrow. My Mother desires her thanks for the game which is arrived safe to-day.

"The kindest compliments of all this family await you, and

"I am, My dear friend Philip,

"Your most affectionate and sincere friend,

"BROWNLOWE CUST.

"Pray observe that this is communicated to you in the strictest confidence."

III

Sir John Cust, the benevolence and true goodness of whose private character is manifest in the most trivial actions of his daily life, was in public affairs a man of great judgment and sound integrity. The eldest of the large family of Richard Cust and Anne Brownlowe, the death of his father left him in a very responsible position. From the Grammar school at Grantham, where he and his younger brothers received their earliest tuition he went in due course to Eton, from thence to Bene't College, Cambridge. In the year 1739 (the date of the Hardwicke-Yorke letter) Sir John was just of age, and

established in chambers to study for the Bar. His mother, who had till now addressed him as "Jacky," after this always uses the more formal "Sir John." In December 1742 he married Ethelred Payne, was elected M.P. for Grantham, and took up his residence in Norfolk St. Strand, where his eldest son Brownlowe was born. The office he had long held in the household of Frederick Prince of Wales was continued to him by the Princess after her husband's death. Hitherto he had been a poor man, and his mother's jointure had not exceeded £600 a year; then by the death of her brother, Viscount Tyrconnel, Anne Lady Cust inherited the Belton estate, which on his election as Speaker she handed over to her son. The choice had been unanimous, and Sir John proved himself worthy of the trust. Re-elected in 1765, when the Ship of State laboured heavily in the stormy seas of political controversy, he was assiduous and unremitting in his attendance at the House, and two years later died at the helm, worn out with much serving. Such was Sir John Cust, a man to be admired in every capacity, whether as brother, son, husband, father or Statesman; a true and typical Englishman of the best breed.

Mrs. Charles Yorke *to* Mr. Philip Yorke

"Mrs Yorke presents her compliments to Mr P. Yorke she troubles him with this note to let him know she is extremely sorry he left town without her having the pleasure of seeing him particularly as the mare he was so obliging to lend her will not suit her being a great deal too much upon the qui vive she supposes the wicked

town has corrupted the morale of an innocent country wench. She is under great difficulties how to return her to her Master and will be much obliged to Mr Yorke to let her know what will be the best method of sending her into Wales Mrs Yorke has sent several times to Mr Philip Yorke's lodgings but could not learn what was become of him till this morning she has sent a duplicate of the note to the Speaker in Lincolnshire in case He Mr Yorke should still be there and begs Mr Yorke will do her the favour to send an answer as soon as possible as she is going into the country for the summer.

" Bloomsbury Square,
" *June* 27, 1769."

Philip's little mare is quite a character. She appears first in Dorothy's letter, where arrangements are being made for her going to Town. She threw the Coachman Sam by way of farewell before she left Erthig. Mrs. Charles Yorke found her unmanageable, and Sir John Cust with his invariable courtesy gave her a temporary home. She rewarded him by nearly killing her groom, injured herself severely, recovered, and then drops out of sight.

SIR JOHN CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

" Belton.
" *August* 19, 1769.

" DEAR SIR,

" You judge very rightly as to the concern which I take in everything which relates to your welfare and tho' your Journey to Town may prove un-necessary yet it was very prudent to hasten immediately to Town upon the information which Carpue's letter gave you, and if you had received a second letter from him with an account

of your Uncle's going to Newnham, I don't know that it would have been advisable to have staid longer at Erthig, for there's something mysterious in your Uncle's servants concealing the state of his Health from Carpue at which I should have been more uneasy if it had been done in concert with your Uncle, but from the reception which Carpue met with, this does not seem to be the case. However, upon the whole, and especially considering the very precarious situation of your Uncle's Health, I can't help being pleased that you are so near Him, and your visit to Tittenhanger and Wimple will, I think, remove all Jealousy.

"We had a very good account from your Friend Brownlowe yesterday morning. His letter was dated from Nancy, in Lorraine the 3rd. of August. He mentioned his having met with your's at Spa, and that he had begun a long one to you at Luxembourg, but the Post going out as soon as he arrived at Nancy necessitated him to write a short one to his Mother. He took a very good Method of letting me know that everything was quite right with Him, by a letter to Mr Cooper which he desired Mr Cooper to shew me. I have now only my youngest Daughter at Home with me, for my eldest with my Brother Frank and Sister Dorothy set off for Scarborough last week, where they arrived very safe on Sunday, and found the place so crowded that they had great difficulty in finding Lodgings. Mrs Yorke's objection to your Horse was well founded. Sam possibly had tamed him a little by riding him from Newnham, but Rest and good keeping have given him such spirits that even your Namesake dare not venture to get upon his back, but I hope the exercise which my Cozen is giving Him will make Him fit for Madame Fane when she returns to Us, for I assure you that she will be very loth to part with Him for the sake of the Horse, as well as its Owner.

"I shall be very glad to hear from you and a good

account of all matters will give great pleasure to, Dear Sir,

"Your most faithful Friend, and Humble servant,

"JOHN CUST.

"Note. All those of my Family who are left with Me desire to be kindly remembered to You.

"I beg you will make my Compliments to Mr C. Yorke."

"Belton,

"*August* 21*st*, 1769.

"DEAR SIR,

"This mornings post brought the enclosed in a Cover from Brownlowe by the way of Holland and another to myself by way of France. The inclosed came just as you see it and therefore if you have no mind that your Correspondence with the young man shou'd be open to Us you must tell Him to seal his letters to you for the future. You will find that He is desirous of this being kept with his other letters to Us as part of his Journal and therefore We must beg the favor of you to send it Us again when you have done with it. There is another reason, viz. that We may transmit it to Scarborough.

"It's impossible to have good accounts from your Uncle but I hope you receive none that are alarming to you. The more I think of your Journey the better I am pleased that you are so near Him for I can't get out of my head the mystery of his servant's concealing the state of his Health from Carpue, As He has had another physician it's not improbable but He may soon return to Town to consult Him again if He is able to take the Journey.

"It's very fortunate that Mrs. Yorke returned your Mare and that the Ladies here were cautious of venturing upon Her. She has proved to be of a very vicious Disposition and has very near killed my Groom. She

attempted to throw Him by all the tricks in her power but finding Him to be too good a Horseman she threw Herself down and kick'd at Him with all the fury and violence imaginable but he was upon his guard and came off with only a few bruises. After this account of Her you will not I believe think it worth your while to keep Her, and in your next you will let us know what we are to do with her.

"The only directions we have for writing to Brownlowe are that letters which go from London next Fryday night and tomorrow sennight are to be directed to Him a la poste restante a Montpellier.

"My Family who are with Me desire to be kindly remember'd to you and

"I am,

"With the truest Regard and esteem,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most faithful and affectionate

"Friend and servant,

"JOHN CUST.

"My Compliments to Mr. (Charles) Yorke if this finds you at Tittenhanger."

"Belton,

"*September 4th*, 1769.

"DEAR SIR,

"I received the favor of your letter yesterday, with great pleasure, and it gave Me an account of the good Reception which you met at Newnham, and of the calm and composed Disposition of your Uncle, tho' Carpue might be alarmed too much, it was certainly right in Him to acquaint you with all the circumstances which came within his observations; and tho' your Journey proved fruitless yet I should have thought you would not have acted with your usual prudence if you had made less expedition. You are certainly right not

to thwart your Uncle's inclination in coming to Town. His being so soon tired of being in the same place seems to indicate a very infirm poor state of Health, but his affectionate Disposition towards You shews an honest good Heart, for which one must esteem Him and wish He cou'd enjoy more Ease and Comfort. Whenever you think it right to leave Him, you may be assured that we shall be very glad of the pleasure of seeing You in Lincolnshire. I cou'd have wish'd for your assistance next Thursday, when my Friends the Corporation of Grantham, with whom you are very well, dine with me, and I am quite a Solo to entertain them.

" The last account we had from Brownlowe was from Berne dated the 18th. of last month. He gave an excellent account of his Health and of the polite reception he met with from Mr Norton, the British President to the Cantons, and son of Sir Fletcher.

" The Trio at Scarborough go on very well, but last week their Tranquility was disturbed by a melancholy accident which happened to John [Brownlowe's servant] who attended them to that place. He took his Horses airing on an afternoon, and the Horse upon which he rode plunged into a quag-mire, threw Him and fell upon him with his whole weight, that the poor man not only had the misfortune to break his thigh, but had so many internal Bruises that for the first three or 4 days He was in danger of his life, but our letters yesterday morning acquainted us that all dangerous symptoms were over, that they have had the good fortune to meet such a very able Surgeon, who says that in all probability he will be very well and have no lameness remaining. But his Cure will be a work of time, and they must leave him behind Them.

" Your Mare is turned out to grass, nor has any body been upon the back of Her since she threw my groom. I wish you may ever make her good for anything.

"All my Family desire to be kindly remembered to you, and

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your most Faithful Friend, and humble servant

"JOHN CUST."

"Belton,

"*October 29th*, 1769.

"DEAR SIR,

"I shou'd have inquired after your health sooner, but was in hopes to have given you some account of your Mare. By a letter which my servant received about 3 days ago, from Bingham, he was informed by the Farrier, that she had been obliged to be laid open, but that she was now on the mending hand, and the Farrier hoped he shou'd be able to send her over to Belton, the latter end of this week. It's a bad affair to trust to people, who are left to themselves, and can't be overlooked; and I can't help being a little suspicious that the man is making a greater job, about your Mare, than is necessary. I propose to send over a man tomorrow or next day to see how she goes on.

"We had the satisfaction this last week of hearing a very good account from Brownlowe, who was at Paris on Wednesday was sennight, but was going to Fontainbleau, from whence he intended to return home, and told us we had no occasion to write any more letters to him abroad, so that I conclude we shall meet him in Town, where we shall be about Fryday or Saturday sennight the 10 or 11th of next Month.

"We had a very joyous Alderman's choice last week, when you was much inquired after, and the loss of your company exceedingly lamented. I never saw the Corporation in better spirits, to which the Deputy Recorder did not a little contribute, and which freed our Friend S: from all *unease*.

"I was very glad to hear by my Daughter Bett: that you was in good health, and hope by your silence about your Uncle, that you have heard nothing disagreable from that quarter.

"My Wife and Daughters desire me to make their best Compliments to you, and

"I am, Dear Sir,

"Your most faithful Friend
and humble servant,
"JOHN CUST."

"Belton,
"*November* 5, 1769.

"DEAR SIR,

"Your little Mare is at last got to Belton in pretty good order, tho' not perfectly well. The Wound is almost healed, but there's a swelling still upon the parts where she had her wound, which the Farrier says will go down in a little time. My suspicions about the man which I mentioned in my last were ill-grounded, for he seems to have treated Her very skilfully, and has not made a job of Her, for the whole expense of Curing Her and keeping Her for a month amounts to no more than £1 19s. 2d. She shall be taken all imaginable care of, while she continues here.

"We set forward for Town on Wednesday, where I hope we shall have the satisfaction of meeting your Friend Brownlowe, safely arrived from his Summer Tour. The last letter we had from him was dated Wednesday was se'nnight, and he talked of leaving Paris as last Sunday, and being in London today or tomorrow.

"I see by the Papers that your Denbighshire Meeting ended as might naturally have been expected it would end, which was called together in the manner, and by the sort of men who assembled the Cause on that occasion. I wish other Countys wou'd follow the example of

Denbighshire, and that gentlemen of Property and real Well-Wishers to this Country wou'd set their faces against the Creations and Factions.

" At my daughter Eliza's request, I have sent you the inclos'd Cover for Mrs Yorke. We are glad She and Miss Yorke were well when you heard, and beg you will make our Compl^ts^ when you write.

" The best Compliments of all here attend you with those of, Dear Sir,

" Your most faithful Friend, and humble Servant

" John Cust."

When Philip looked back on the years that intervened between his father's death and his own marriage he must have seen them as they really were, the most important and anxious time in his whole life. His fortunes hung in the balance, since everything depended on the testamentary arrangements of James Hutton, " Little Profligacy " as he was familiarly called even by his nearest relations. Mr. Hutton had given a solemn promise, but he had deteriorated sadly since that time; and by his bedside, as he lay slowly dying of " drunkeness and debauchery," a female harpy, backed up, as it was supposed, by a male confederate, was using all her influence to alter his mind. How Philip's friends watched over his interests and reported progress ! Good Sir John, fair Elizabeth, devoted Brownlowe, faithful Tom Birch, and a certain somewhat injudicious ally, Mr. Carpue.

The story opens with two letters from Tom Birch, brimming over with affection, and written in his usual outspoken breezy style. He, too, was a lover and married not long after the lady of his choice. Carpue was a shoemaker, and kept a bachelor lodging-house

where Yorke and his friends lived when in town. John Jones was Hutton's personal servant. The tale as it develops under these various hands has a truly melodramatic flavour. It might have been painted by a Hogarth, penned by a Fielding. As, scene by scene, it unfolds before imagination's eye, the various characters stand out against the lurid background of the Prodigal's last hours. The tawdry, bedizened courtesan hanging over the dying man, with her ally, Chilton; Dr. Dawson, with his wig and gold headed cane, and the sleepy, frightened but excited servants watching all night by their master's bedside.

THOMAS BIRCH *to* PHILIP YORKE

"DEAR MR. YORKE,

"I wish I could write anything to you concerning your Uncle. He and Lady called on me this morning which is the first time I have seen him since I see him at Newnham. I see not the least alteration either as to his health or Morals. In all Probability he will die as he Lives which is Misarable indeed, he hath been with him a month at Winchmore Hill and has now taken him to his House in Town . . . He eates nothing, how long he may continue so God alone knows. . . .

". . . Pray burn this and all the rest. . . ."

"London,
"*March* 24, 1769.

"HON. SIR,

"Master Hutton yesterday was very ill. I met Mr —— who sends his compliments to you, he said Master Hutton is in a very low way, he told him he saw an angel at the feet of the bed which told him he shou'd

die by 2 o'clock, he had his servants all up in his Rooms to take leave of them and kept them all night, he had Mr Finch to prey by him and shed some tears but as soon as he was gone he talked as bad as ever. Mr Wymondsold and Sir Brownlowe was at Master Hutton's yesterday, both familys are well. Mr Chilton says he does not apprehend any danger at present but if he should he will let you know. I have no more at present but my humble duty to you and my mistress and miss

" who are your humble servant,

" JOHN JONES."

Extract

" There are three things in life " (so writes Mr. Birch): " I begin seriously to wish, that I could see more of you, that your Uncle was dead, and that you were married, I wish them all, because I am inclined to think, that the first will not happen till the last has, nor the last till the second has happened, besides I am convinced that Poor Hutton would have no loss in leaving the World, for he does not cannot enjoy it, and he would himself be none to any of his Friends, for he has really become like the Dog in the Manger, since he cann't himself, he wont let others enjoy life. Married you will never be whilst he lives, unless you act entirely the Independant Part, and marry out of hand, nor do I believe it would be attended with any bad consequences, nay I think had you been married Twelve Months ago every thing would have been easy and quiet by this Time, for Dependance on such a narrow mind as your Uncle's (I did not think so once but I can't help it now) creates insolence to an intolerable degree, and the more he perceives it the worse he will grow. . . .

" However, my dear Philip, the only way through Life is to form an opinion of one's own, and stick to it, for to give advice in these ticklish cases is dangerous and to

take it is very often to quarrel with One's friends afterwards. For my own part a very moderate income would content me could I but have my request granted one Time or other. I have often made it as I daresay you have, in the words of that true Son of Nature, the ever gentle Hammond—

> "*I only ask, of her I love possest,*
> *To sink o'ercome with Bliss in safe Repose,*
> *To strain her yielding Beauties to my Breast,*
> *And kiss her wearied eyelids till they close.*

"In the meantime my Dear Friend, whether we are married or single, at all times and seasons, I shall ever remain

"Most affectionately yours
"THOMAS BIRCH.

"This was wrote before I received yours which I did this Instant and I must again repeat that it would make me happy if you can come and spend a few days here and then we can go together for I do long to have a peep at your mother and sister who I have not seen this age."

From THOMAS BIRCH

"*Nov.* 30, 1769.

"MY DEAR PHIL,

"I was in the Coventry Machine, at 10 o'clock on Sunday Night, and got hither at 6° on Monday morning, my Fellow travellers were five Graziers in every respect good company if they had not [ ] a little too much. I was determined not to write to you, till I had seen or heard from your Uncle, which I had no opportunity of doing before this Day. I sat with him from 12 o'clock till ½ past 2 o'clock, he asked after you rather kindly, for he knew I had been in Wales, as he not long since called at Southgate and the Captain told

him as much, he said nothing of your Mother and Sister, but I said that you were alone but expected them soon. Our conversation was common and general, he looked shockingly and takes nothing but Ases Milk with a little rum in it nor has for this fortnight. I fancy Carpue has told you, who fancied your Uncle would be jealous of me, but indeed he *seemed* glad to see me. Dr. Dawson called while I was there and felt his Pulse and talked a little to him, I find he has once eat some clear Beef Broth, which the Doctor advised him to persevere in eating. It seems Dawson says according to Carpue, that he thinks he shall set him up yet, but for my Own Part if there come a Frost I think it will pinch him nearly to Death. Poor Profligacy, he is very feeble in voice and every thing, and yet with the Doctor his expressions are so ridiculous I could not help laughing. . . .

"One thing I had like to forget your Uncle talks of letting his hands and face go unwashed and letting his hair and beard grow for a fortnight for he has some thoughts of buying an annuity and by such means he will come at it cheaper."

"*Sunday, Dec.* 3, 1769.

"Honoured Sir,

"I received your Letter yesterday of Mr Cust and was this day to visit your Uncle, he told me he had just received a Brace of Hares from you which stank so damnabbly that he was obliged to order John to burry them deep under ground for fear of Infectin the air and has left such a damnable stench in his house that he has bin very ill ever since. So far, your Uncle, poor man, he has been very ill indeed and Wasted to that degree that he is nothing but a meer skeleton and so weak that he can hardly take anything Stronger than Asses milk and that abought a Quarter of a teacup full at a time. So long as he has Moister in him and keeps up his spirrits

he may hold out but I think his time in this world is very short, how to advise you with regard to seeing him I can't tell, in that you may use your owne discretion, he is very jellous and peevish and I wish I could say you had no enemies about him, his 'Lady' dont Like you at all.

"I will do the Best I can for your Interest and if I see it necessary will write to you again soon. Mr Birch is here. I should be glad of a Brace of Cocks if it is not too much trouble which is all at present.

"From your most obedient

"JOSEPH CARPUE.

"Searle St.

"*December* 6, 1769."

and then Tom Birch adds as follows :

". . . Carpue says he is quitte out of all patience with your Uncle, and is tired of writing at all about him. I believe it is because he wont die ; I find he wrote you a letter about your '*Stinking Hares*' Jos and I had some talk about them This morning, He sent Betty privately to your Uncle afterwards to know, whether he was in better Humour than when he dictated that letter ; and John told her that the Hares proved very good and that Mr. Hutton seemed sorry he had dictated that letter to you but charged John by no means to let Carpue know he was so.

"He has got another Nurse and Carpue thinks she is a good one but poor Little *Profligacy* does not like her because she wont talk to him during the Night as she sits up with him."

Mr. Birch is entertaining on the subject of James Hutton but his language is such as may not be set down here.

" The following I was not allowed by Carpue to tell you but I can't help it, however you must take care not to mention it to him at all or anybody else. Young Smith the Sailor's Huttons [ ] son, told Carpue, that your Uncle's present [ ] was long [ ] to Chilton and that Chilton is as great a Rascal as ever liv'd, that he is underhand not only an enemy to you but even to him. I hope this is not true for Smith may have some grudge against Chilton, though Carpue says, I am ignorant how he knows it, that the Codicil to your Uncle's will has been several times altered. Carpue likewise told me that upon your Uncle's saying something about his affairs, he said to him, I hope you will let everything go in the right channel, that the [ ] immediately said to him ' Surely Mr Hutton is at Liberty to give his Fortune to whom he Pleases. There's a pretty [ ] for you. Your miserable wretch of an Uncle smiled at this. In short, Chilton if he is a Rogue may together with this [ ] whom he has introduced, do you irreparable mischief.

" I must confess I am willing to hope that Mr Chilton honest, because if he is not, I do not see how we are to help ourselves. I tell you this unwelcome tale because it is my own wish always to know the worst for then, if things turn out better it is an agreable disappointment. If I were in your place, by Heavens, I would make myself as easy as I could, entirely depend upon what I had of my own, and if he did leave me his fortune why well and good, if not, why the Disappointment will be less if you treat the Expectation as precarious and uncertain. I do not know how to think, vicious as he is, that Hutton will prove himself such a Rascal as to leave his Fortune from you, but yet he is so strange an animal, that if Chilton is so great a—(I know no name bad enough for him in that case) as to be your enemy. It is impossible to say what pass a [ ] and a [ ] are

able to work a man who is so infirm in body, so fractious, and whose faculties most undoubtedly must be in some degree impaired. A short time in my opinion will put these matters out of doubt for when I saw him he was extremely feeble and is so still. For to tell you the truth I don't think Carpue of any service to you going so often chattering about what he ought to hold his tongue, nay the very sending Betty privately as I mentioned to you if it come to Little Profligacy's ears will do you no good.

"Carpue says Mr. Hutton is jealous of you and him and I have desired him not to go so often and when he does by no means to talk about you or any pecuniary matters at all I do not mean that Carpue would intentionally hurt you but he is so great a fool that he may do you mischief inadvertantly. This Chilton rung in my head. I long to be certain whether he is a rascal or no I have a mind to call upon him, I believe I shall.

"It is, my dear Friend, a strange world and, strange let it be, one thing I am certain of, that while I continue in it I shall ever remain,

"Your affectionate

"Tom Birch."

James Hutton lived on until after his nephew's marriage, and his will, witnessed by Mr. Wymondesold and Tom Birch, was an eminently just one. He provided for his illegitimate son, a sailor called William Smith, and for his mother's companion Mrs. Catherine Lally, but left the bulk of his possessions to his sister Dorothy with succession to her son. Hutton was the last of his race; his brother Matthew had also died without heirs, so to his nephew Philip on his mother's decease came the fine estate of Newnham (the house is

now pulled down), a house in Park Lane, and portable property of great value to be in future years the glory of Erthig. There is a huge blue jar signed by Albrecht Cornelis de Keizer the famous Delft potter, made for Dutch William, bearing the Lion of Nassau on a shield of pretence on the Arms of England, and said to have been given by Queen Anne to a lady of the Wanley family, who married a Hutton. There are pictures, more decorative and interesting than intrinsically valuable, Chinese chests and cabinets brought round the Cape in the holds of East Indiamen, when "John Company" was still young, China plates, dishes, and jars more than can be counted. "Famille Rose" and "Verte," Nankin, old English; and mahogany silver-bound cases with the Hutton arms. In these cases are pistol-handled knives and forks, tea caddies, sugar sifters and liqueur bottles, and the family medicine chest is perhaps the most interesting of all. Certainly Philip was a most fortunate man. These things did not at once come to Erthig. There are many references to the moving of the furniture from Newnham in his letters to his steward. Those in Park Lane remained until 1787 and the account of their removal will be found later.

The year 1770, so eventful in the life of Philip, was fraught with incident to the two families of Cust and Yorke. Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Sir Richard Cust, had died on November 3, 1769, Sir John Cust, a martyr in the service of his country, passed away on January 24, 1770, Anne Jemima, Philip's "little sister" fluttered out of existence in the early spring, and Dorothy Cust died in the Autumn of the same year.

QUEEN ANNE AND GEORGIAN SILVER—MELLER AND HUTTON

On July 2 Philip married Elizabeth; on October 15 Brownlowe led to the altar his first wife. Truly wrote Dr. Cust to his aunt, Lady Tyrconnel, "the happy marriage of my niece, and the very promising prospects of my nephew are Blessings of which we are very sensible, but three funerals and two weddings are very uncommon events to take place in one family in the course of 12 months."

IV

To the early half of the year belong the love letters of Elizabeth, letters so charming as to deserve a place among feminine correspondents already known to fame. They were seldom dated, being written almost daily; and although Philip rallied her gently on her bad handwriting, to be sure they were not less "desirous" on that account. Brimming over with tenderness and sympathy, full of quaint conceits, little did the fair writer imagine that any eye save one would attempt to decipher the "sad scratch." This elegant young woman was practical withal, and although noted for good taste, makes no allusion to her own fineries, but concerns herself with her lover's adornment, (he was always a culprit in this respect,) with the ordering of the coach, engaging servants, and even of the postilions' caps.

"Turn over a new leaf" she scribbled at the top of the last, written, it is believed, on the very eve of their wedding; and then with the gentle dignity always characteristic of her she begs he will be at home when she calls, and send a written message, for "it looks more respectful."

ELIZABETH CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

" Downing Street,
" *March* 22, 1770.

" Your letter did disappoint me very much, a long History I was not so unreasonable as to think of having ; but I fully expected to hear the *Country Air* had prov'd to you, as *usual*, an infallible Remedy ; before this reaches you I hope all *complaints* will be far from you, that they will have left you on their own accord, or else that will have given you proper assistance : I must beg you will not let any dregs remain ; I used to think very lightly of Colds, *sad Experience* has made me *too wise*, you shall purchase from me and not from your own feelings. I must sum up all I have to say quickly ; I have the disagreable business of Dressing for Court to undergo, I am tempted too to go to the Play in the Evening, being Mrs Yate's Benefit. I have set my mind upon having *the Chair* set out upon its journey next Saturday ; I am *peculiar* in one thing, I hate to be disappointed I took the liberty to send Sam to Cop's ; I was much afraid he would be lost in the immensity of the shop, but he executed his enquiries very accurately, and much to my satisfaction. I hope to-morrow's post will make me full amends and that I shall not find *Walls* or any obstructions raised in my *Dressing Room*. I have (perhaps not done wisely) not cut my Coat according to my Cloth, but my Cloth to my room ; I have got quantity of *charming* Chintz, you must not be angry, you cannot with me— With regard to the most *material* thing in *life*, the Cook ; my mother has been so good to say she will give me up her's, she [the Cook] has many good qualities very careful, and makes *charming white soup*. I think therefore I had better take my mother at her word, as I certainly should prefer her's to a Stranger.

" Brownlowe would inform you we were all as [ ]

as when you left, It was very good of him to write; he says he sent you a long Letter, this weather has braced up my Nerves, and has done more good to my Spirits, than all my Reason and *Resolution*, or what is more effectual *good advice* could do; the worst is it is but temporary good; like a Dream which the next Rainy Day will quite demolish. We have not been able to persuade my dear Mother out of airing since you left us, it seems so disagreable to her, tho it is essential for health one can not insist upon it. We have pretty good accounts from the scatter'd *Remnants* of our family. Lady Cust was safely arrived at Bristol and they send us word my Aunt continues to mend, as the Weather is so much against her it is flattering, God knows! I heard *your Bart* was going to take Miss Vernon for his second. I heard too it was all off on account of Miss Vernon's conveying the Letters between Lady G and the D of C most likely it is all false, I heartily wish it may be. Sir G. H is to be married very soon, he parades through Red Lyon Square in his chariot and six to the *amusement* of all the old Ladies, and the *envy* of the young. I have wrote so long, I expect the *Sheriff* every moment Therefore, I must prepare myself for my *last words* I think I have been very good to you, and sent you so much news that I not only expect to escape being *starv'd* or *burnt* to Death but to have a long life even for *ever*—I am very glad you had satisfaction of finding your friends in perfect health and beg my respects to Mrs and Miss Yorke, my Mother and Anne send their compliments *mine* to your chearful friend.

"Yours affectionately

"ELIZA CUST.

"I beg Brownlowe's pardon for forgetting his compliments he is gone to Mr Casamajor. Betty careless forgot to have a Frank ready if he don't return in time you

must pay for me. Sir what a pass are *we* come! when even a Lord Mayor's ball will set the world on fire we found the whole Strand illuminated and were [ ] home."

"Tradespeople of every sort are most tiresome to deal with—I sent several messages after my Chair since I wrote, but not receiving satisfaction, I went myself yesterday, and drag'd Anne with me (for I am nothing without her), all I could get for my trouble was to hear it was impossible to be done; however I did set right some mistakes, the man promis'd me to send the drawing of the Sopha which I wish'd to send you to-night, that you might not fancy I had been idle; it is not forthcoming. *It is* all *very right.* One must have somebody to scold (as it is a very constitutional exercise) and a Cabinet maker as well as any. Whilst I am in this humour (i.e. out of humour) don't expect to escape tho' so distant; I did expect the account how much paper would be wanted for the *new* dressing Room because I promis'd to send the Man word. I know you had many things to think of but my Dressing Room I hope it was not a wilful forgetfulness people are apt to return to a [ ] way of thinking an adequate exchange is all that is desir'd; an Eye for an Eye, a Tooth for a Tooth and a Room for a Room—very fair.—I am glad your cold is wearing off You know I shou'd rejoice to hear Mrs Yorke's spirits were better; I ought to have her ease much at Heart, as I thought we had agreed before we last parted no alteration should be made on that account till we came down; I only propos'd the Paint brush for the Parlour if that would be done without being offensive, it would be fitter to receive the new Chairs than in its present state; you who are in the house can best tell; I dare say Mrs Yorke will have pleasure in giving up the place to you, and me; I can easily Imagine and feel that

a place—a pretty one too (that is to please you, Beauty will always attract the attention at the first,) one has habited and esteemed for some time quitting must be irksome and I join with you in wishing *thatt* to be as much relieved as possible.—Brownlowe has made two visits [ ] Mr H, he was extremely low yesterday, talked much of *going*, and a Vision that appeared to him in the shape of an Angel Poor man! it was a goodly sight. tho they found his spirits much depres'd to day again they warmed him up amazingly before they parted, they visit'd him for an Hour; he takes the attention very kind which is a good sign; it is an ease to my mind I have seen him, shou'd he think proper to send for me again I will most certainly obey the summons: even persons you can have no *affection* for; the seeing them in [ ] moments must be shocking very to *me*. Dreadful to think—How horrible to feel. Brownlowe does not think him worse and I think you have left him at a very good time. I should have been much vexed to have had you [ ].

"Pray give very particular orders about the Chairs you know they may come on us before I have my Room; make the workmen thoroughly understand them; it would have been charming to send the Chairs down whilst you was there—I am not at all in a writing mood have had my say, and therefore I may as well finish; you perhaps may be wholy engaged with your workmen, your mill etc or may be this may come in as Plumb after your Labours. So much the better. I never can write a letter without diping into the fourth side. I was afraid Sir you would *flatter* yourself. This family with me desire kind and best respects to Mrs and Miss Yorke.

"With due affection

"Yours Eliza Cust.

"*K*— is not unoticed by me

"*Saturday night, March* 23, 1770."

" Downing Street.

" *April the 3rd*, 1770.

" I *dare* not omit writing by this Post, indeed I cannot ; the contence of your Letter to Browne concern'd us very much. I heartily wish tomorrow will inform us of your Sister's perfect recovery. It is very hard your Peace should be greatly enterrupted during the short stay you make with your friends. I am vex'd Little Profligacy should add to your distress ; he has cry'd Wolfe so often, you do wisely not to mind him : I wish he would profit by all these Reprieves and consider the Sentence must pass. B : has begun again his Daily Visits, the little Gentleman was got into his Parlour, but seem'd rather weak and low. We found and left our friends at Stalbridge well ; my sweet little niece not much wax't in Stature but much improv'd in agreableness. You can't immagine how much your last letter pleas'd me, not, believe me for once, because you flatter'd me by bringing the account I wish'd. I believe I thank'd you for it in my hasty note. You grow quite Romantic by living in your Woods ; I am glad you will return before we leave this Place : though you have had a good many *Holydays* lately I hope you will be able to make a few more and peep upon us in our *Retirement*, if we go ; I say if, for as the time of moving from hence approaches, it disturbs my Mother greatly.—Your hint about the *Inkstand* was directly taken into *consideration*, and is, I believe, resolv'd upon, with an additional *extravagance* of mine. I am resolv'd I will not distract you with four Sides this time, because I have not time, besides when you receive this you will be much engag'd with packing up all your *Coats*. I intend'd to have sent you two Cards of Invitation I found upon B's Table, but I believe I have lost them.

" The best Wishes of this Family attend you and your's,

" Beleve me with truth, Your affectionate friend,

" Eliza Cust.

"P.S. I am really asham'd of sending this sad scratch *even* to *you*. I wish you wou'd be so good to have the measure of the Room very exact, and let the Top be measur'd likewise, as I have some new Ideas in my Head about the Cornice. A doleful Bell has been tolling all the time I have been writeing, which has quite vapour'd me."

"*Thursday Night, April 8th*, 1770.

"You and your house have been constantly in my thoughts ever since I received your last Letter, I can and do most sincerely feel what you and your Mother must have gone thro' as sincerely as you *have done* for me: I am very impatient for tomorrow Post, which I am in great hopes will being me glad Tiding confirming your's and the Doctor's opinion. I truely lament so much distress has happen'd to impair the enjoying your friends; I fear this hurry may be prejudicial to Mrs Yorke's health, in short, my fears are awake for all of you.

"I don't know whether this will find you; I wish it may not, and then all will go on well. I shall be glad to see you, but I wou'd not upon any account you left Mrs Yorke till her anxiety with regard to your Sister was quite over. I desire Monday may bring a Letter, if not you; I expect the former the most, as I think it very likely you may be tempted to stay another day.

"All my friends join me in kindest Wishes. It is very late that I can add no more. Believe me very truly,

"Your's affectionately

"Eliza Cust.

"P.S. Mr Hutton continues pretty *stout*."

Pause for a moment over the pastel portrait of a dark-eyed, dusky-haired damsel; this is Anne, the little sister who worshipped Philip, and laid in a "white tafety gown for his honour's wedding." Anne was accomplished in

all that Bath and Chester could teach; she could do dainty needle-work, excelled in music, and bespoke for herself, not without misgivings, a harpsichord, for which her brother paid, entering the amount in his useful pocket-book. Anne was always delicate, and the drastic medical treatment of the day drew the very source of life from the fevered, enfeebled frame. A keen spring wind scattering the spring blossoms came down over the hills, and Anne, frailest of frail blossoms, was cut down with them. How her mother loved her! Her letters are full of the doings of her "chum," as she fondly calls this child of her later years. It is almost possible to picture the scene when Anne and her friend Miss Disbrowe, thrilling with excitement, went off to the Chester Races. Dorothy and Mrs. Disbrowe waving good-bye from the steps, the maids peeping out of the window at the new frocks, the men servants all agrin at their young mistress' delight, the dogs jumping and barking in unreasoning but abounding sympathy. Her mother never recovered her loss; gentle, grateful, uncomplaining, to the end, she dragged on the seventeen years of solitude, a broken woman, dependent on the ministration of her humble friends, Elizabeth Ratcliffe and "little Betty," her niece. In the midst of so much sorrow in both home circles, the happiness of Philip and Elizabeth gleams like a ray of sunshine through a mist of tears.

"Thurlow,

"*April* 14*th*, 1770.

"Time is the only Restorative to severe affliction, it operates indeed very slowly in such heavy distress, as you

are now labouring under, which makes the consolation of friends very requisite : You make me happy by telling me, I can comfort you in some degree ; If I have really *an Alabaster box* of that *Precious ointment* I will equally devide it amongst yours and my family ; tho' I cannot Heal I may soften your Wound.—Many thanks for your affec : letter, I coud not expect other than a melancholy one but I hope they will grow better for your sake as well as my own ; let that be as it *can*, I hope you will be so good as to repeat them ; I shall be very dull if I have not one again tomorrow ; I cannot take or think anything unkind of you *now*, but you must be very certain, I am very anxious about you, and your dear Parent.—We had been talking about the house before I received yours ; we entirely agree with you it ought to be looked for soon ; We do at present intend being in town Tuesday sennight and if nothing *unforseen happens*, we certainly shall be, as Brown : wants very much to be in Town on that Day. But with regard to the House we have convers'd a great deal with my Mother about it ; and find for many reasons it will be desirable to have it not distant from the North Road, and in the way to this Place ; The most material *one* is, it will be a very great comfort to my dear Mother to have it not very far from Hence. Poor Woman, her spirits have been very weak since she came here. I don't wonder at it. The conveniences too arising from the House being near the North Road will be very great. Hertfordshire ; or about that County were the spot wish'd for ; indeed I think there is not much time to be lost it will be some difficulty to get a House to suit ; tho we return so soon you may if you like it (I rather wish you to do it if it will not be troublesome to you) be enquiring and perhaps *our* friend, Mr Birch, wou'd be so good to assist you. Mr Gore and Hucks I believe live in that part of the World ; (there are no Houses to be let about [Ingstestre]) they wou'd

be good people to get information of. I earnestly wish your Mother may determine *for us ;* There is no judging for *others*, or I shou'd think it more comfortable for Mrs Yorke, it will certainly be much to our happyness to have her as near us as we can ; cou'd we choose I shoud wish to have our house in or near some small Village or to be as close to the *Den* as possible. No, no, quite out of the Reach lest the Lion (or Wolfe, much the same thing) break in upon us and devour the peace of the sheep, now they have *lost* their Good *Shepherd*. Call me not Dilatoryship any more ; I don't think I ever merited that appelation, and I am sure not now. I don't mean to repine, but I say the truth when I say *fortune* never favor'd us, and then forsooth you laid the blame upon poor *I*. may she prosper us as we advance. I dare not looke back; There be many who have not even the comforts we have ; let us then make the best of them and look forward on our Journey. Where is the Wretch who thinks his Lot the most to be deplor'd. I write Ray by this Post and I shall give Brown orders about sweet Perigét that she may be ready against I want her, for I intend to Ride out with you every Morn and Evening, am I not very good ? let me not trouble myself about many things, and to forget to remind you of one thing very needful which is to send for *your Papers ;* do not misunderstand me and think I mean to *Hurry :* far from it, but if it is to take place the time you wish'd it, it will be highly necessary to have them ready against Brown : and my Uncle's return, you will be to blame if it is to be protracted longer by *Worldly affairs*.—You remember well a *peice* of *Paper* you gave me which has undergone (fabulously) as many Metamorphisis as Ovid's did, first it took an antient Form, that of a Ewer and Bason, then the Modern, and delicate one of a Ladies Inkstand ; my eyes being Jaundiced turned it into a *Gilt one* but by grave of Wise Reflections I have quite

ANNE JEMIMA YORKE
Pastel by Hoare

lost sight of those Baubles. What think you of a Library ? not a *wooden one* like that we saw at Cobs ; I wish you may approve my last Thought, let me know by the *return* of the Post, it will be more usefull and will give me much longer satisfaction. I intend to do you the Honour to chuse you my English Librarian, for my French books I must depend upon my sister's as my own poor Judgement. I will think and give you a list of some of my books. I shall prefer the Antients to the Moderns for I have not such an opinion of *our* Learning, in my next— *J. H. D. D* might be upon the Books, or his arms, I think the former will do. I shall always think my Thanks due to you for the *Present.* Was my letter to sell by quantity you might get a good sum you know. The best of a Lady's letter, you may take it up and lay it down as often as you please, like many Books ; Let it be said of them, that they are *always new.*—I have wrote you a sad scratch you must excuse it—I expect shortly to be summon'd to Supper. I pray you and your dear Mother may keep your Healths. God be with you and comfort you is my earnest desire. *Every one here* mingles with me their sorrow and kindest wishes to you and yours.

" Your most true and affectionate friend,

" E. Cust."

" I am afraid of breaking in upon your thoughts at this *time* but we are all too anxious for your Mother and yourself to forbear enquiries after you in your present Melancholy situation and I could not wait longer, tho Sam said he would call upon us this morning—If there is anything in our power that we can be of any assistance in or cou'd be of any relieve for Mrs Yorke or yourself you will give us very great comfort to command it. My Mother begs if this home can be made useful you will say so Mrs. Yorke may be quite quiet and every thing shall be made as comfortable as possible. Brown : went

out very early this morning and we expect him at home soon and as soon as he comes he will call upon you, had he or we known sooner that you was in town have sent before this—I have this moment rec'd yours —I shall have as much satisfaction as possible in seeing you, as Brown : I hope will be able to call upon you soon, dont think of coming till he can bring you as I am afraid it shou'd be too much for you—I could not expect any other account of your dear Mother. God preserve you all I can say no more my dear fellow sufferer

" Yours most truly

" E. Cust."

" Brownlowe gave me great satisfaction by telling me Mrs Yorke wou'd go out. I heartily wish it may be of some service to her. Pray be attentive to your own Health which I have many fears may suffer. I must beg of you to write me to-morrow night. Hearing from you will be the only comfort I shall have whilst I am absent. May God comfort you and your dear Mother, I will think of you every hour of the Day you shall have a letter from me Saturday which is the first Post. Once more God bless you and believe me Mr Yorke

" Yours most truly and affect

" Elizabeth Cust.

" *Tuesday One O'clock.*"

" *April* 21, 1770.

" The Post dealt most liberally with me yesterday and brought me intelligence from two quarters the most desirable, you and Brownlowe ; he was then perfectly well ; we expect him here by Dinner tomorrow. Pere comes with him ; and we depart from hence on Monday —You will think I enherit the Spirit of contradiction— I now feel dull and sorry about leaving this Place ; tho my Wishes are at variance with my sensations. Be the

Place what it will ; the Remembrance of *Past Days* ever so Grievous ; I can't help it, the leaving kind friends who are so desirous of our staying gives me a regret.—It is a satisfaction to me that I shall see you within two days. Please God ! Coud I see you what you was ! That is an enjoyment *Reason* forbids me at present. I hope however, I may find you in good health. I must not expect to find your Spirits much better ; you have not gone the way to mend them. You have saved your word and your Credit by your *little note*. I, believ'd it first to be an *addition* only to *four sides ;* I trust you are now making me up a Letter, and that you will not this time serve me the *last ;* and the *worst* of your Correspondents. You can't send me less if you send me any ; if you quite *Blanche* me. Oh ! for Revenge !—I am glad M's people follow'd my Wise Maxim ! I was much afraid for the quiet of your Mother.—I saw an advertisement that wou'd have suited us, but the house was situated near Reading, *that* wou'd not do *at all*. I wish we had got *one*.—I shall not forget to remind you of your Promise ; whilst you are entertaining me, I will employ my fingers for you. Let me tell you ; if I believ'd you so *great* to forfeit your Vows, (I don't see Promises should end with L they ought to continue with Friendship, which is more *sacred* and *Reasonable*, and therefore should take place of the *other*, this only by the bye) to return to the Vows. I say if I thought you equal to breaking your Word, I shou'd most certainly never be yours as

" Elizabeth Cust.

" My Eyes are heavy (and so wondrous dim I cannot see at all) with Sleep ; I know they wou'd complain more *heavily tomorrow morning*, which makes me desireous of assuring you to Night of my Constant Thoughts of Mrs Yorke and yourself, and of *all* our good Wishes.

Speak of me most tenderly to your good Mother when you do and as one who has a sincere feeling—Women are generally said to make longer Postscripts (scraps I suppose) than Letters. I am an oddity—I seldom make any. As this is my last Letter of this separation I *kindly* bid you once more Adieu.

"*Saturday Night near Twelve.*"

"I wish I cou'd write you a lively chatty letter but I feel myself too dull and stupid: Thank God I have no fresh reason to occasion it, consequently it is only the Dullness of an hour. I am sorry it should be alloted to you, it will be too good a compliment to say it may pass off before I finish this—It was *kind* of you to perform your Promise so early after your arival: you may be certain I was very desirous of hearing you had performed your journey safe; I don't like your complaining again of the feverish Heat, don't keep the *little Fire alive*, as some *Folks* do; but I pray it may be quenched by the Bristol Water. I like your Remedy; I verily believe myself The *original* occasion of it your fear of its appearance, is a stronger proof. How you dare, you write *that* frightfull *Pet* name? it is worse than Poppy, the *K* stands staring and gaping upon me too: I cannot for your *credit* reserve *this letter*.—Coachmen distress me exceedingly I am determined you shall have the care and plague of all the Men. The servant, Mr Birch sent me very reasonably demanded £24, he was quickly despatch'd and we return'd to the former with fresh conditions which are thought better, not by enhancing the Wages nor by adding to the number of servants (which would be worse). I will tell you the regulations when we meet, he wou'd have accepted them but the Gentleman he was driving had secured him. . . . Reddish is making further enquiries. I hope we shall succeed in geting one before you return and have all the

liveries bespoke. I promise I will doe my endeavours to get forwards, therefore I beg you will not lower your spirits about that. I have got a great deal of fine lace for you to see. *I will* have you extravagant upon yourself. Your silversmith has never sent the knives and forks for me to see, I shall go to the *City* on Monday and perhaps I may *vouchsafe* to call on him. I must send to Mr Birch tho to be informed where he lives for I forget. I am much obliged to your friend, he gave himself a great deal of trouble about the Coachman several notes have passed. I met him at Ranelagh and have promis'd to drink tea with him. The *Horses* are not yet bought which is unfortunate, I will mind they are under good care if they should be purchas'd before the coachman. Miserable *sinners*, no Coach, no Horses, no Coachman and no House. I hope they will all come, don't think I sit still and say so. I assure you I have bustled since you went and wish I may be able to succeed in doing a great deal during your absense. Don't be surpris'd if you put up a little advertise (for a House) in the Daily Paper. Brown: called upon Mr Hutton yesterday, he had kept himself cool and was rather *better*. I am brought word today he had had some sleep. Sam, poor man, has got a very bad sore throat and cold. Mrs Reddish returned his good offices and doctored him I sent word to desire he wou'd not follow his own judgement.

"I will send after him tomorrow. For your sake I am got into a very civil humour I think. I hope he will soon get the better of his cold. I am glad you are likely to get a comfortable Home for Mrs Yorke. I shall indeed be very happy to wait upon her. I beg you will make me kind and respectfull to her. I thank her for remembering me. My Mother, Brother and Sister desire their best compliments to Mrs Yorke and yours. Everybody is retiring to rest (we keep better Hours *now*).

I think I have done very handsome and may be permited to take my leave. I shall be glad to hear of your returning.

"Believe me at all times yours,

"ELIZABETH CUST.

"*Fryday night, May* 18, 1770."

"Your very kind letter of to-day has reviv'd my Spirits, which were at a very low Ebb (as you would find,) when I wrote from Cambridge, we parted with our good Gentlemen at seven o'clock Yesterday Morning; we exerted ourselves so much; as to Breakfast with them; the Town of Cambridge was in a mighty bustle and full of company who were all for Newmarket. Several of Brownlowe's acquaintances enquired after you, amongst the number Radnor the fruit man the most civil saucy man I ever met with; he hop'd *Master Yorke* was well and said he had lost almost all his *Worthies.* You was very good to mention in your letter you wou'd not miss a Post, it has relieved me from anxiety, occasioned by being held equally by Hope, and Fear lest I should not challenge your Hand amongst the letters; I now look forward with a degree of certainty and Pleasure for Friday. I am glad Mrs Yorke gets out; my Mother has been so good to get out these last two Days there is I doubt little alteration for the better, but it is certainly more for her health. There are many things I wish fix'd; I dont mean to distress you tho' I wou'd have you think of them, as I think we may be too greatly agitated by a variety of business meeting at once. The House is a material business, and I wish it to be enquired about by all sides and I was in hopes you might get some information by Mr Birch; I wish you to employ yourself as I am persuaded it will be of service to you now, and hereafter. I think you agree with my opinion with

regard to the Library. I shall not send you a list, for you wont stir about; if you should chance to pick up some before I return, I beg amongst the *number* of *good* Books you will keep clear of Howel: he has been publish'd a Century and a half; I heard half of his Sermon last Sunday, and I hope never to be so unfortunate to hear the latter part; I quite dread to see the old Book, sure next Sunday will not bring him forth to see the light again; he is much too dark and [rum] for the enlightened children of this age—I cou'd almost fall down and adore the Sun for deigning to shine upon us miserable Siners; ever since our arival here; The shadow of his *dear Face* now surrounds me. I wish I cou'd convert you and tempt you to enjoy his reviving Beams, you who are so used to exercise can never keep your Health or have your spirits restored by constantly staying in your Room—I hope neither the Public Lyon or the *Private One* have disturbed yours or Mrs Yorke's quiet; I am much afraid of the former now he has got loose. I wish he and his followers lik'd novelty as much as I do, they wou'd then surprise the public with quietness.—The other Post made me receive much pleasure; by informing me a dear old friend and Schoolfellow whom I had despaired of ever seeing again (for she had been settled some years in Jamaica) was return'd to England; she has indeed got the start of me (tho' she was my senior) but I trow not the advantage, she is already a Widow. The third side must for this time contain my say; my dear Brownlowe demands a letter from me, it is the only one I can write, it will be great satisfaction to him to hear how we go on. Be assured my letters come fraught with every kind thought and good wish from every one of this House. I am what I was

"Yours &c
"Eliza Cust."

" *Saturday morning.*

" I *write* just to tell you I *can not write :* I am in a few Minutes going to set off to another Country, as you are resolved never to return. No,—but la *Partie* quarrée, viz., B. F. P and E make a Visit of two Days at Felbridge. Believe me well and receive my thanks for your *satisfactory* letter of yesterday. I have already fancy'd the size of my Room, the Paper up, and even ma *Petite Personne* seated in the *midst.* Anne will be so kind as to continue this. How came you to think me out of spirits when I wrote last ? The Frost is gone, which I lament but I will not let my Spirit fly from me, I expect to be refreshed with a little Country air. My Uncle is come. Adieu.

" Eliza Cust.

" My sister sais I will continue a continuation from me is what you will not thank me for but you must take it very civily as Bessy is not in the way to do it herself. I have nothing to add than that Mr Hutton continues much the same as yesterday which is better than before. . . .

" remember me to your chearful companion.

" Believe me most truly

" your sincere friend

" and in time your affec : sister

" A Cust."

" As my letters are so *very desirable* and perhaps this may be the last I can write, and it is the long Post, and you have been good in writing two Posts together and by the *last* you promise a continuation of well doing, I will not omit a short scratch to night, tho I gave you *four* sides last night, believe me your complaints have no weight with me, I look upon them in the same light by letter as in conversation ; only for variety—If expecta-

tion contributes so much consolation why do you repine having had so great a share of it ? I do not forget the object you was upon, which gave rise for you to say so and thank you kindly for so frequently remembering only a *little Woman :* I agree so much with you that I beg (if *you can*) you will not inform me what it is, and that I may know nothing till you can shew it me yourself. you dont mencion anything about the house at Bath ; therefore I am afraid you have not been able to fix upon one to your satisfaction you give a sad account of Bath but you are such an *unfashionable creature*, I don't mind you ; I am glad you *still retain* a good opinion of me—only think I quite forgot (being *overwhelmed* with *business*) to inform you in my last, of a great Disappointment ; it is with *deep* sorrow I tell you now, the Masquerade is defer'd till next Year ; I dont know at present where next year is, but if it ever shou'd arrive and *we* are *still* ; I shall look upon your promise of attending me, as good, and perfectly safe, I think that very handsomely said of me ; It is a pity it could not be now, we should have had such a happy party—I dont think I told you we met your friend Mr Wymondesold at Mr [ ]. Brownlowe introduced him to us, he behaved very civil and obliging ; he gave an account of the last Masquerade, but I don't think he *enjoyed himself.* I hear the Knife and Fork is ready for me to see and shall call upon the man on Monday, and if they meet with my approbation I will order the rest—

" Poor Sam is a good deal better today I really have a very good opinion of him, and was quite concern'd he was so very bad. He will consult no other advice than his own, which shows him not to be a true Professor of his *Trade*. There is a mighty bustle in the Park and except my sober self all the world are assembled in George Street to see the grand illuminations at the French Ambassador's for the Dauphin's Marriage with the *Arch-*

duchess. She causes a great deal of trouble, tho' do you see you are well off on the whole. It was very ridiculous of me to write for I had nothing in the world to say, but I believe there is a kind of satisfaction for your Eyes, even to peruse my Scratch. You don't flatter me in general, you do find sad fault with my writing, I wont have you go so far to think the contents stupid, tho it may be so, it would be a very bad sign. Our little girl Kelly is very happy with the thought of going with Pere to Bristol on Monday we have had but an indifferent account from thence to-day Pray dont explain your letter another time. I have a reason for my request and I *should* have *found* it out *without.* Pere has given me the use of his Coachman during his absence, if the horses come, he will be an excellent person to have the care of them till another is got, I wish we may succeed before you come I expect in your next to hear you set your Face this way, you know I dont mean to hurry you. All my dear family join in kindest remembrances to Mrs Yorke and *they* (without me) desire their compliments to you. I remain

" Yours affectionately

" Eliza Cust.

" *Saturday night, May* 19, 1770.

" I am very glad you was to pay a visit to our friends at Bristol it will be a satisfaction to them and will be to me. I wish you may have found them in good spirits.

" *Turn over a new leaf*

" The *least* I can do, *Philip,* is to help your Memory as I have been the Cause of the Loss, I wou'd have you on the receipt of this, go to the Hosiers, pray chuse the Stockings *yourself.* I will have the white ones *very handsome* and the others very neat. Remember to order the Postillion's Jacket Caps all the things must come to-morrow Evening. The Stockings I beg you will send

as soon as possible, as I want them to be mark'd. I shall be out all the Morning, wish you to Dine here, and stay the Evening. I shall be at home and your company will be *most welcome ;* after this civil Invitation you can not send a denial; besides I know it will give you *real* pleasure, and you make it a Point never to refuse *your* Elizabeth. Pray mind what I say and make my Words good. Fryday Morning, seven-o-clock, and a cloudy morning. I am in a very pleasant humour. I have a letter of great consequence for you, Brownlow was up very late last night, I suppose upon our business.—Our Coach was here this morning for me to see; it looks well. This put me in mind of our *real* Coach which I wish very much to see to-day is the only Day, if you will be at Home at Eleven o'clock I will call upon you to go with us, indeed I will; do pray be at Home at this time.—Send a writen Message it looks more Respectfull. I hate words; they are but wind and will be blown away before they reach my *Ear.*

"Your's Elizabeth Cust."

The following bill was evidently for a present to Elizabeth from Philip. The account is copied from a leaf in his pocket book-entered on his wedding day.

March 5.	To a Lady's toilet with Instruments mounted in Gold,	18.0.0.
	To 2 Bottles of Odour of Roses,	1.1.0.
	To 1 Bottle of British Essence	0.2.0.
Received the contents in full		19.3.0.
	Jno. Trench.	
1770.		
June 10.	Mr Lindsay, (Watch-maker)	4.17.00.
July 1.	To Postilion's Velvet Cap tasselled,	3.02.00.
1.	Post Chaise to Northaw,	0.18.00.
2.	To say P.P.S.	21.00.00.
2.	To Miss Cust as present,	10.10.00.

	3.	Betty at Carpue's,	1.01.00.
	3.	Under-maid, & Boy,	0.13.00.
	3.	Baine, (Silver-smith)	75.10.00.
July	4.	To Dover Street Servants, further,	05.13.06.
	5.	P'd the Fee to Clergyman at Northaw,	03.03.00.
	5.	Ditto. . . . Clerk,	00.10.06.
	5.	Drums,	01.01.00.

ELIZABETH, WIFE OF PHILIP YORKE OF ERTHIG, DAUGHTER OF SIR JOHN CUST

CHAPTER II

PHILIP YORKE THE FIRST OF ERTHIG

(*continued*)

I. A mechanical poem : The second John Caesar : Elizabeth to her husband : Garrick at Wynnstay : " Your (dis)obedient wife " : Love me, love my dog : Brownlowe's second choice : " A sad scratch " : Relics of bygone days : A mutual friend : Brownlowe's first marriage : Mistress and maid : Seat in Wrexham church : His first-born son : Dorothy travels to town : Behind the scenes : Dorothy's last letter : " Betty the little " : Sir John's widow : Marchwiel family pew : A link with the past.

II. A wedding at Erthig : A Court gown : Nocton theatricals : *The Merchant of Venice* : Severe weather : The governess : A studied composition.

III. " Those the gods love die young " : Trappings of woe : Elizabeth's children : " The Royal mail " : The children's journey : Visitors are expected : The Squire goes a-wooing : Hearty congratulations : Father and son : An Eton boy : " The Head " : Lord Brownlow's long letter : The weather and the crops : Highway robbery : Francis and Peregrine : Hospitable preparations : A dying farewell.

IV. The unfaithful steward : An eccentric tenant : The last of the Lawrys : " A man to all the country dear " : Grantham Election : Chairing the member : Diana Yorke : A distinguished kinsman : A Scottish dame : Philip as an author : Servants' portraits : The old Squire : " Wicked Will " : Philip's pocket-book : An old-fashioned landlord : Obituary.

I

A GREAT alteration in the nature of the correspondence marks the second half of this year. Dorothy had left Erthig, Elizabeth's love letters were at an end, and Brownlowe, who married only three months later, had neither time nor occasion for prolonged correspondence.

At this point of the story the old fashioned Romance writer would close the third volume, the Fairy-tale teller pronounce the final phrase " and they married and lived happily ever after." Romance has indeed given place to Reality, the day dreams of youth are merged into the prosaic realities of every day routine; but life is not over; for many indeed it has but just begun.

Philip was a voluminous correspondent, and his long, explicit, dictatorial letters to his steward give a very comprehensive idea of the important alterations going on at Erthig. The damming of the Clywedog, the draining of Coed y Glyn, were related in Dorothy's and Tom Birch's letters; but when, after her son's marriage, the former removed to her London house, John Caesar reigned supreme not only over the indoor and outdoor servants, but a whole crowd of workmen as well. The western front of Erthig Hall had suffered decay, the old red brick work had to be concealed under a coating of buff coloured local stone, and for the mortar which united them Philip had his special receipt. The mountain brook which meanders through the Park was made to drive a ram which in its turn pumped up pure well water to the top of the house. Connected with this is the " Cup and Saucer " a remarkable cylindrical waterfall, copied later, by permission, for Hawarden Hall, Cheshire. The engineer who constructed it, one Emes, was very proud of his achievement, and his regrets at leaving Erthig are believed to have found expression in the following lines.

A MECHANICAL POEM

Lines written by a Mechanic, on Leaving this place where He had been employed on some Improvements.
(possibly the one who constructed the Cylindric Falls).

1. Dear elegant Erthig, Farewell!
Thou paradise here upon earth!
'Tis not for Mechanics to dwell
Too near so much beauty & worth.
With reluctance from thee I depart
To the place of my native abode,
To regret so much beauty & art
Should lie so far out of my road.

2. When thy fine shady walks I survey,
Grandly arch'd with magnificent trees,
Where, retired from the heat of the day,
I enjoyed the ambrosial breeze,
With reluctance I well might resign
So sublime & enchanting a place,
Where harmony almost divine
Hails the concert of Nature & Grace.

3. On thy fine verdant hills & rich meads
When I cast the last lingering view
And Nature's strong eloquence pleads
How hard 'tis to bid thee Adieu,
Methinks thy sweet voice I still hear
O'er the meadows responsive below,
Fond echo repeats to my ear
What, poor pensive bard, wilt thou do?

4. Yes, Erthig, thy sweets I must leave,
'Tis necessity drags me along,
But while at the absence I grieve
Let me honour thy name with a song.
Adieu, most enchanting of Seats,
Where Nature & Elegance join
To form such delightful retreats
As no Banks can furnish but thine.

5. Adieu, honour'd Yorke, to thy Seat!
I am thankful for what I have seen;
Nor can I forbear to relate
In what a sweet place I have been.

May Peace in thy Mansion abide !
And improvement with Plenty be crown'd !
That thy liberal heart may provide
For the needy, the neighbourhood round.

6. Dear elegant Erthig, Farewell !
Thou paradise here upon earth !
'Tis not for Mechanics to dwell
Too near so much beauty & worth.
With reluctance from thee I depart
To the place of my native abode,
To regret so much beauty & art
Should lie so far out of my road.

The following letters with their prosaic details were written in the early half of the year, but could not with any sense of harmony have been interpolated into that charming series, the " Love Letters " of Elizabeth.

" 1770.

" John Caesar,

" My mother would have you give orders in her name, to Charles Ebrell to come up to town with her horses, that is her two coach horses, and her double horsed Rocket. If it be necessary he must take a lad he can trust with him whom we must return ; but perhaps some person may be wishing to come up and if he be such as to be trusted, why we may save the expence of sending him back again. I hope you would have thought of this, and of every other instance of Economy without any particular hint from me. Charles must set out on Monday next, don't let him forget the Hammer Cloth and it may not be amiss you give him the care of the Rental for 1770 and any other necessary Papers to be sent up. When I hear from you I shall be able to give you my orders more particularly. At present I have neither spirits nor matter to dwell further on. I do

CYLINDRICAL WATERFALL.—"CUP AND SAUCER"

depend that during mine and your mistress' unfortunate absence you will exert all your Care and Caution in my affairs and above all things be careful when and for what you disburse money.

"I am your very well wisher,

"PHILIP YORKE."

"*April* 28, 1770.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"I would wish you to write oftener and more largely for there are many things and those of real consequence which if they pass by and are neglected during the first Impression are seldom recalled and in the end totally laid aside. The Mills I must beg and desire you now most closely to give your time and diligence into from your great industry you may be able to collect the real intrinsic value of the obligatory business none of which you must suffer to escape you. Let your Mill books be distinct and carefully correct and close. The late Miller acted a dirty part, they have totally and entirely forfeited all connection with me and see they be instantly dismissed so that the lands and everything else they held under me may be ready to be delivered over to any new tenant I shall approve. When any such offer I would have you acquaint Mr Hayman but materially refer yourself in the end to Mr Vernon to whom I shall write fully my mind by the next Post. Carry on the stable and pigstye at the Miller and finish (if not done already) the Mill Gate Mr Puleston so that it may appear in very sufficient repair. I am less able to speak to you for you so narrowly write to me. If your letters were more diffuse it would be in my powers to give you more distinct and perfect orders. I must have you write the occurences of every week and then I shall be able to collect the state and answer all and every demand and necessity of my affairs. Keep all the accounts which

have been delivered in from the late most melancholy misfortune and I shall soon call for them.

"Let every demand on the occasion be immediately paid. Insist upon due payments and if my tenants wilfully continue irregular, I will positively proceed to extremities.

"My servants I conclude (but you don't tell me) are at their usual board wages. The cook should take care to pot what Butter may and can be made, and I hope you have always your mind about you, to be a good and just steward of every part of my Property.

"I am always your very well wisher,
"P. YORKE.

"*Sat. night.*
"*April 28th*, 1770."

"Serle Street,
"*May* 10, 1770.

"MR CAESAR,

"Mrs Yorke will want several things to come from Erthig to Bath; the best and cheapest conveyance it seems is from Shrewsbury by water. I have wrote to Mrs Betty Ratcliffe how they are to be packed &ct. You will take care to see Mrs Betty therefore soon and asist her in getting Boxes made to pack the things in; when all the things are packed up and ready you will put them into your Master's Waggon to carry them to Shrewsbury and go with them yourself and deliver them safe into the Hands of the Barge masters or Water Carriers, taking a proper receipt for them. Before you carry the things and as soon as you receive them you must ride to Shrewsbury and take the enclosed as directed where they will tell you everything about the water carriage which it is necessary for you to know before you send the things. Your mistress would have you pay all the Soap, Sugar and all Bills that become due for your Master and set no

more down to her Account as she has done all her part as to paying. Your mistress desires her love to your Mother.

" I am,
" Yours sincerely,
" THOMAS BIRCH."

Northaw was the scene of Philip's wedding, a very quiet one, owing to the mourning in both families; and only a few days later by a summons to the death-bed of James Hutton, Philip was parted from his bride, who wrote from her Mother's home at Thurlowe, her first letter.

ELIZABETH YORKE *to her husband*

" Thurlow,
" *Tuesday Morning, July* 7, 1770.

" MY *dear* MR YORKE,

" I verily Believe, (and do most heartily Wish,) this Letter may have very little chance, of meeting you, before I shall: but as nothing is impossible when *Jemmy is in the way*, I would not omit writeing: for if it should so happen, That, you are prevented (by unforeseen accidents) setting forwards for this place till after Fryday (on which day this will reach Northaw,) I think at least it is to *be hop'd;* nay I am sure to hear your *little Wife*, with the rest of the Coach, (not forgeting my *Jewels*,) ariv'd safe at this Place and are in good health and found their friends the same, will be most welcome Tidings to you. A Hot Day made our journey fatiguing, and we did not reach this place till late.

" My Uncle and Aunt Vernon were much disappointed *I left you behind* when Aunt had with great Joy saluted us all, poor Woman, she call'd out very earnestly for her

Nephew Yorke. They both desire their kind love; and will expect you today. I can't say I do much, and shall receive you much out of Humour, and with one of my severe Frowns on Wednesday, if you do not (according to *Promise*,) send a Messenger before you.

"Whatever is in *the Wind*, I hope you are in Perfect Health; and free from all accidents which await us poor Mortals, with your Thoughts directed this way. Most likely we shall be enjoying each other's Company, when this arives to your Hands; therefore I will not enterrupt ourselves with more of this *sort* of *stuff*. I hope you retain these commands I laid upon you to keep free from hurry. I am quite easy which way this turns out, and hope no *worldly affairs* will ever form a power to destroy our Peace & Happiness so long as we both shall live. I hope you was good Company to my dear friend Jenny, don't forget the fishing Rod: we shou'd have tried our success there today had the Weather favor'd us. All our Relations desire their best love to you,

"and I am, my dear Philip,

"Your true, and very affectionate Wife,

"ELIZA YORKE.

"P.S. No Sand; therefore excuse Blots. The next Letter I shall have the *satisfaction* to write to you shall be neater, Philip."

In the midst of his own happiness and the agitation associated with his uncle's demise, Philip did not omit to make every arrangement for the comfort of his bereaved mother. She did not long remain at Erthig, but thereafter lived in her house in Park Lane, making occasional visits to Sunninghill and Bath. The Erthig letters contain several allusions to theatricals at Wynnstay and there is among them a programme of 1778, and by

these it would appear that Garrick was a frequent visitor there, taking the part of stage manager and producer to the company of aristocratic amateurs.

"*Monday evening, July* 3, 1770.

"Sorry I am, my dear Phil, that you and dear Mrs Yorke should have any alloy to your joyful spirits certainly very affecting to her. You have both now the comfort that you have a Partner to take off and lighten each other's woe. You are vastly good to me in writing, and kind to me ever beyond expectation, and am certain, beyond my deserts, and I cannot express the satisfaction it is to me to hear from You. Pray, have you got your Carriage and horses and the Servants You wanted etc. What kind of a place is Northaw to live in. I do not ask this question from an impertinent Desire but for the pleasure of thinking of you after. Have you fixed in your mind your journey to Erthig yet? Patty Myddelton sends me word that Sir Watkin Williams is planning great design for a theatrical amusement at Winstay; so far that Mr and Mrs Garrick are expected there and Masquerades and Balls. I think I hear you say that will not hasten your coming down. I fancy these fine folks are going to meet Mr Myddelton, their [ ] past all hopes I fear a recovery poor Miss Patty can hardly support herself nor one cannot flatter her with any better hopes. She keeps her bed 3 days a week, indeed very ill; is now got into the parlour. O dear The Myddeltons writes on purpose to congratulate Mrs Yorke and yourself and me on the matter, so does your Cousen Jones's from Oxford. They write very affectionately. Do pray excuse and present them, and likewise mine to Sr Brownlowe Cust for his obliging intentions towards me. I never was very capable of paying my respects as I ought, and now much less so, but I leave all those in

your good hands to do for me, and beg one more favor, that as soon as you have given my Letters they may be burned. Adieu.

" Your ever affectionate Mother,
" D. YORKE.

" (Note) My kindest respects and love to Mrs Yorke. She is very good in remembering me.

" I hope excepting your tenderness towards James you can get him off your hands.

" Can you send me from Sir Brownlowe, 2 franks, directed to Miss Dolly Davies."

Philip's mother is his next correspondent and her allusion to Lady Cust and the old lady requires some explanation, one being Ethelred, mother of Elizabeth, the other her grandmother, Anne, Lady Cust.

" *Wednesday, July* 11, 1770.

" MY DEAR,

" I cannot express how much obliged I am to you and Dear Mrs Yorke for your kind Letters. I have wrote a few lines to acknowledge the kind favor she is so vastly good as to say she would excuse my answer. Yet I could not feel easy without. Birch sent me by this Post two £50 Bank Notes. Thanks to You for them. I am certain You think of me more than I could expect. I bless God daily for your happiness, and Continuance of it, and am truly concerned for the affliction that is likely to happen to you. What ever time is most agreable to you both will be so to me, to see you here. I hope by the time you speak of I shall have got Betty Ratcliffe with me, indeed I find the want of her. I fancy your visit on Monday to Mr Carpue gave him very high spirits, and worthy Mrs Betty exerted herself in Cooking. I hope Mrs Yorke is not to dine at poor James'. When

you see him, present my love to him and let him know I am still alive and heartily wish him better in body and mind. I hope Northaw air agrees better with you than London, and that you have lost your Cough. How is Lady Cust's spirits? Indeed the Old Lady's seem to exceed them very much.

"I hear a fine account of the King's Mill, which is a pleasure to me, as is all advantages that happen to you, being ever, my dear Phil,

"Your's affectionately,

"D. YORKE."

"MY DEAR MR YORKE,

"As I have *disobeyed* your desires (and consequently my own wishes) it is highly proper, and necessary, to inform you of it. I mean to tell you that the plan of our Journey is altered to a degree; it is only the Postpon'd for a short time and as unforseen and unavoidable Reasons obtains as (viz: my aunt's health,) I am sure you will not be displeased (i.e. you cannot with me) as I hope my dear Philip will approve of my Present Method of meeting him. My mother poor woman! I found very miserable and was desirous of staying as long as she cou'd with convenience to me and Brown: he has therefore put off his being at Northaw till the Wednesday Noon. I think of accompanying Brownlowe to town he will be there the same night (Wednesday,) I cou'd then pay my respects to my Mother Yorke and return with you to Northaw; if you think better of meeting me at Northaw on the Wednesday it will be the same to me; if you can *stay* with me shou'd I come to Town I will order Molly to have my room ready in Downing Street, Brownlowe will sleep there and will very likely be more convenient to us to do so likewise. I beg you will consider not to give Mrs Yorke any trouble I beg you will find yourself at Northaw (if you do come) early in

the afternoon, we shall be then in very good time; you will please to let me have a letter answering to my questions at Northaw on the Wednesday not only shou'd you not come, but in both cases, as I know I shou'd receive it before [ ] you, I pray you to *mind* what I say, and be *punctual* in your answer. I wou'd most certainly have made another journey by myself and set out next Monday but I have frequented the roads so much lately I thought I shou'd be remarked I know you will think I have said much more upon the subject than I need, but be assured in cases of Settlement, conciseness will not do if others besides oneself is to understand them. I have had much diversion and sport by fishing just as good as at Mrs Lemon's. I was out the whole Day yesterday it was a very fine gleamy Day for the purpose. Brownlowe is perfectly well; he has brought with him a charming horse for my Sister, every Perfection of the Mind and beauty sufficiently to be agreable, in short, *next* to Perigée she is the best Horse in the Universe. The greatest misfortune which attend Absenses arises from many fears; I do trust and wish most heartily you are perfectly well. I really shall be unhappy if I have not a letter from you this afternoon. will you remember my saddle? Pray think of the little Teabox. I have risen half an hour sooner this morning that I might serve *my Lord*, without interfering with my first Duty. The time is now expir'd. *May* we have no interruptions to our Peace and happiness. God be with you, dear Philip, think of me constantly as your affectionate Faithful and (dis)*Obedient* Wife.

"ELIZA YORKE."

"*Sunday Morning.*

"There is only one reason makes me wish to come to town. Mrs Evelyn intends being with us for a day or two this week which may prevent my seeing Mrs Yorke

till the beginning of next, you will consider and advise me what to do only. If you come to me be very early or you will miss Brownlowe (for the *little God* of *Love* guides the [ ]) If I come to you, you will be at home at seven, Brownlowe will set me down at that time (perhaps before) at Grosvenor Gate; he will get out or not as will best suit Mrs Yorke's spirits. Make me dutifull to Mrs Yorke and affectionate to Mr Birch the kind love and Compliments of this family attend you and Mrs Yorke."

"Lee,
"*July* 18, 1770.

"DEAR SIR,

"Mrs Lawry with myself is very much obliged to you and your Lady for the very kind and agreable visit you made us yesterday; we hope you had a pleasant ride back to London and the evening; and as pleasant an one this morning to Northaw. I am sorry I had not room for your horses in my Stable, which consists of two Stalls only; for according to the old proverb 'Love me, love my dog' all the things belonging to my nearest of kin and particular friends are allways welcome to me, as far as I have room for their entertainment. We all join in wishing you and Mrs Yorke a very pleasant excursion into Suffolk, and in our kindest respects to you both, and in best compliments to Lady Cust, Sir Brownlow and Miss Cust, I am dear Sir, your affectionate kins-man and much obliged humble servant,

"JOHN LAWRY.

"If Sir Brownlowe Cust will at his leisure direct the enclosed to Mrs Coidcall, Ashburnham, Sussex, and you will send it to the post with your letters, you will both do us a favour. Mrs Coidcall is a daughter of General Parslow's, and the wife of a worthy Brother of Rochester.

If you will be so good as to send me a Frank for your Mother, I will pay my respects to her."

Certainly even the best of men can easily transfer their affections. In December 1769 Brownlowe was going down into Staffordshire to offer his hand to the elder Miss Colebrook, and why she refused so desirable a suitor does not transpire; but he soon recovered from his disappointment, and six months later Belton was preparing for a bride, Jocosa, daughter of Sir Thomas Drury Bart, of Overston.

BROWNLOWE CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Lincoln,
"*July 30th*, 1770.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"As your Wife tells me in her Letter to-day that you have been in daily Expectation of a Letter from Mrs Yorke I have been somewhat surprised that you had not received one, I am extremely sorry that you did not send to Downing Street and prevent the enclosed from coming to me here. You cannot receive it now before Thursday, and I am a little afraid that it will be kept by the Post in Lincoln till that evening and so not be with you at Newnham till Friday. My sisters return to Thurlow will make all there extremely happy, and it is very kind of you to go into, what must be under all Circumstances, a dull scene without Her. I am very glad to find that our Friend T. Birch will accompany you. My Uncle and I came here last night, and this morning I have received a fine Packet of Letters, you will not wonder that the first I open'd was from Miss D—— she writes with a most generous Frankness and a good nature and Regard which promises me the most perfect Happiness that I have any Idea of. You can conceive but it is not everyone

that can the Pleasure which I have in preparing for the Comfort and Entertainment of a Young Mistress of Belton; her safety will be the subject of my daily Prayers, and continual consideration; it is therefore that I shall be willing and desirous of taking your late Uncle's Coachman into my Service provided you can and will recommend him from your own experience and that of your Friends as an expert and careful driver, for tho I design to take my present Coachman, I shall not trust Miss D to his Driving, I must therefore employ your Uncle's Coachman, if I take him He must also be carefull and understanding in the management of Horses.

"I hope you will receive the Vinson safe and sweet, if it should be a side instead of a haunch it will be owing to the Buck not having been killed time enough to be put up cool; the Keeper being obliged to be at Lincoln yesterday could not kill till this morning. He promised me to go out as soon as he could see to shoot, and if he had the Luck to do the Business expeditiously he was of opinion that the Haunch would be sufficiently cold to be pack'd up in the Evening.

"Having several letters to write I cannot spare more Time than my best Compliments to T. Birch and to subscribe myself

"My dear Philip

"Your affectionate Brother and

"faithful friend,

"Brownlowe Cust.

"My Uncle desires me to make his kind Compliments to you."

"Thurlowe,

"*August* 7, 1770.

"My dear Philip,

"I had the satisfaction of meeting dearest Anne in Perfect health at Chesterford, where she had been

many Hours. I did not reach that place till past Two. However I arrived there safe without the least accident, not even a Panick. My friends here are much pleas'd with my returning to them ; My good Mother put on a few Spirits to recieve me, tho I find her uneasy about my Aunt who has had (these last few days a bad cold.) I hope I see her recovered I trust ; (by the receipt of this) you will have the comfort of meeting Mrs Yorke ; and will have found her not fatigued and as well as we wish.—The idea of your being employ'd in this new business for me, Pleases me much. If I do not get a letter on Sunday, I shall not think well of it and shall have much of that disturbing sensation *unease* but I dont doubt in the least—Brownlowe may come today tho ; I rather think it will be tomorrow by what he sais, you will meet me on Tuesday I hope ; as you propos'd ; to Dinner if without hurry for yourself ; will be the more agreable for me.—The great Sam will I hope perform the journey to town on a Mule as Periget's feet want saving. Pray has he recovered his few Wits and will you be so good to bring with you to Northaw the Tea box from Hemnys. The post waiting for this, hastens my Conclusion. All my friends here desire to be kindly and affectionately remembered. My Duty you will give to our good Mother and best compliments to our kind friends.

" I am
" My dear Philip
" Your true and Honourable
" and most affectionate wife
" Eliza Yorke.

" My mother and sisters beg their kind compliments to Mrs York. This letter is quite free from blots all owing to the Red Morroco which is a shade approved and still in high favour. I Pray we may have a happy meeting in perfect health."

"Northaw,
"*four o'clock.*

"My dear Philip,

"I think I may say there are no commands you can make but will be most readily comply'd with by me, the last most Willingly as my desire to meet you and partake of the Hurry (and *business* if I shall be able) you must be in, equals your wish to have me. May I but find you in Perfect Health, I fear you have hurried yourself too much; I have just had a snack here I call'd here to take up Ray who will be useful to me. I hope to be with you soon after Six I sent Bill off with this, as I have Will [ ] with me. I wish to know if you will be in Park Street or elsewhere. I shou'd not chuse to come to *the House*, during your absence if this shou'd find you at Birch's I can come to you there or Park Street, just as you like, if you will meet me there. If you shou'd be at neither of those places then I must take my chance and find you at home; I am well and left all friends the same. I have sent you a sad scratch hardly *sense* or to be read but my being in great haste must excuse me. I thank you very kindly for your affectionate Letter With great haste I am my dear Philip your faithful and affectionate wife

"Eliza Yorke.

"Pray order the kettle to boil, a dish of tea will be comfortable and refreshment to me."

Dorothy could never be persuaded to revisit Newnham and the terrors she experienced at the prospect of a London journey are graphically described in a later letter written by Tom Birch to her son.

DOROTHY YORKE *to* PHILIP YORKE

" *Monday morng. Aug.* 20, 1770.

" I beg my dear Phil both Yours and Dear Mrs Yorke's release. I cannot say promise, from my intended Journey to Newnham. I find my poor unhappy mind too unsettled to mix with the calm and serenity of my dearest friends, and melancholy truth it is, I can receive no pleasure, but the thought of their being so ; and as your old friend (Tudden) says, quite a sink boat, when in company more than for a day. It is too great an exertion for my spirits, low to the greatest degree have I been since Saturday today something better. I hope this will find you and all the family well at Northaw. Pray my respects and compliments don't fancy me sick as I have no particular disorder to complain off but a very retired and still plan I must pursue, therefore when this enormous town fills, this house shall be ready to accomodate for those months Dear Mrs Yorke and yourself. I wish you both a pleasant journey. I quite give up the thought of going into Hertfordshire and also ever another journey to that place where I must meet with too many poignant reflections for me to bear. Let me know how we shall change Coach horses and about the boy etc.

" Yours affectionately
" D. YORKE."

The courtship of Philip and Elizabeth had ended at last in happy marriage, and there is every reason to believe that neither of them regretted their choice. They needed, indeed, much sunshine in their souls, for the circumstances which surrounded them were anything but enlivening, with the deep mourning of both families, and the death of Mr. Hutton, which obliged Philip to

desert almost immediately his new made bride. August found them, not at Erthig, but at Newnham, engaged in going through their new possessions. Philip, who had spent many school holidays in his mother's old home, must have been fairly familiar with its contents; and with sound common sense, was unlikely to dwell on sentimental retrospects. Elizabeth, however, may have dropped some tender tears over the "rubbish," the pathetic relics of bygone days, of value to none save those who had no further care or use for them. Even the acquisition of so many beautiful things could hardly have made the task a cheerful one; but the presence of that delightful schoolboy, Simon Lawry, must have been surely welcome to both. Philip had run across his cousin Lawry in town, and had made a note in his pocket book of his promise of an invitation to young Simon Lawry to pay him a visit during the summer holidays.

JOHN LAWRY *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Lea,
"*September* 19, 1770.

"DEAR SIR,

"I return you my hearty thanks for your two very kind and affectionate Letters, which I have been favored with since you returned to Northaw from your Suffolk excursion, and for your kind concern about Simon, and all your favors to him. Mrs Lawry joins in these thanks, and we desire Mrs Yorke and Lady Cust will accept of our acknowledgement of their kindnesses to Simon.

"He gave you an account of himself by Saturday's post; and yesterday we got Dr Hunter, whose anatomical

skill is, I suppose, equal to that of any Man living, *as a Friend* to look at the thumb of his left hand for our greater satisfaction, and He pronounces all safe, though a little time will be required for the effects of the sprain to be entirely removed. The other hand is well, and we purpose upon the Doctor's encouragement to send our youth to Eton in a few days. I am very sorry this disaster happened at Newnham to give our good friends who had been so kind to the Boy, any disquietude. We carried Him yesterday to pay his respects to my Aunt. We rejoice to find her so well in health, and she is very good to her Friends in exerting all the chearfulness she can, when she receives them. I hope very soon to wish you and Mrs Yorke joy of Sir Brownlowe Cust's marriage. I wished to have waited upon you and the Family at Northaw, according to your obliging invitation, but I have been sadly harrass'd with the plague of a bad Man in the shape of a Clergyman, who by his excesses seems to have brought himself to a state of temporary Insanity.

" My Aunt seemed to think that you will not set out upon your journey to Erthig till next week; whenever you go, we all here join in wishing you and Mrs Yorke a good Journey and a continuation of good weather, and with all our best respects,

" I am, dear Sir,

" Your most obliged and affectionate kinsman and most humble servant,

" John Lawry."

Abraham Grimes *to* Philip Yorke

" Coton House,

" *September* 3, 1770.

" Dear Yorke,

" It is with much concern that I have received your two letters as they have suggested to me an idea

of pleasure which I shall not be able to enjoy; it appears scarce less impossible for me to remove myself to Erthig at present, than it did to your friend Macbeth that Burnham wood should travel to Dunsinane My friends here have so embarrassed me in engagements that I might as easily quit my station on the eve of a battle as obtain a furlough from hence till they are satisfied

"I have a further mortification in not being able to comply with your invitation inasmuch as I have been obliged to refuse the same satisfaction before, more than once; you will not however be so uncharitable as to ascribe to inclination what I can with great veracity assure you appears to me in the light of a great disappointment, I was on the point of writing misfortune, but it would be jesting with the real calamities of life to take up a matter of such sort in so serious a tone, but it is indeed a disappointment. Present my respectful compliments to Mrs Yorke; I earnestly wish to see her display her economic merits as much as I do admire those other qualities which as they have engaged will I make no doubt preserve your affection in the proportion they deserve. I have not done, but having endeavoured to re-instate myself to your favour am now going to make a request; Your intentions are to stay about a month in Wales, and I presume you intend returning by the same road you came, I wish you would observe that Dunchurch is barely six miles from hence, and that when you are here you are exactly the same distance from London as if you were at Dunchurch and have an infinitely better road than thro' Northampton; this is true upon Honor, I do not insist but I entreat that you will make Dunchurch your inn, cannot you so contrive as to give us a day or two, it is not impossible but I may accompany you to London; my Father you are already acquainted with, and my Mother will be happy to receive you as a farther

inducement; you will very probably meet Ryder who will be in England for a fortnight.

"Write to me the result of your consideration upon the matter and fix your hour that I may meet you at Dunchurch to convey you hither.

"Believe me, dear Yorke, yrs very sincerely,

"ABRAHAM GRIMES."

SIMON LAWRY *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Eton,

"*October 14th*, 1770.

"DEAR SIR,

"I now embrace the very first opportunity, of returning you many thanks for your obliging Letter.—I should have taken the Liberty of troubling You, with a Letter from me before, to return my repeated thanks to you, and Mrs Yorke for all your kind care and Civility to me at Newnham, but coming to Eton so late and being burdened with two heavy Tasks; which Dr Foster told me if I did not say in a few days, I should lose my Remove I had hardly time to write to my own Father, but applying myself very hard, Velis et Ramis. I have gained my Remove, and am now in Remove. . . .

"I hope you and Mrs Yorke had an agreable stay at Erthig; as the weather has been pretty fine here. I preserved the secret of my hand as well as I possibly could, I was rather sorry to deceive my Father; but He did not examine me very Deeply. They rather at first, I believe, suspected it was from a Horse, but your Letter cleared up all their doubts. Mr Norbury is very well. We had a man who performed several feats of Horsemanship a few days agoe in the Playing Fields. The Masters and Scholars all made a gathering for him, but when it came to *Skimmer Jack's* turn to throw in his mite, he look'd at it twice, and telling the man he thought he had got quite enough for so little a Performance, without it,

(and considering this was Jack and wife Joan at Home,) He at last with shear reluctance pouched him a whole sixpence. Cat. Edwards is still living here [ ] him back [ ] me, as we are very good friends.

"Charters, Chin, and John Cutler, these Worthies your old acquaintance, are much obliged to you for your kind remembrance. Bless my old *Master* says, Chin, if I only knew where he lived, I would send him a Pea or two. I am much obliged to you and Sir Brownlowe Cust for the enclosed Frank to Lee I received a Letter lately from my Father, He, my Mamma and Sister are all well. Pray make my best respects to Mrs Yorke, and Believe me to be, Dear Sir,

"Your affectionate kinsman and very much obliged
"Humble Servant,
"SIMON LAWRY.

"P.S. I shall be very glad to hear that you and Mrs Yorke are in perfect health, as nothing will ever give me more pleasure."

In October 1670 Brownlowe Cust was united in marriage to Jocosa, daughter and co-heiress (with her sister, Lady Buckinghamshire) of Sir Thomas Drury of Overstone; but their happiness, alas! was of short duration, for young Lady Brownlowe died two years later of "a putrid fever."

"Marble Hill,*
"*Oct.* 16, 1770.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"After the two kind Letters of your's and your Wife's I cannot resist the Pleasure of informing you

* Marble Hill, Twickenham, was given by George II to Mrs. Howard, who became Countess of Suffolk. She left it to her nephew, Hon. John Hobart, second Earl of Buckinghamshire. Horace Walpole says of him, "I call him Clear Cake, for he is fat, fair, and easily seen through."

today by my own pen that I was married this morning before 9 o'clock to Miss Drury. Dr Cust who is an excellent Performer, will acquaint you that we both went off extremely well. We dined and lay at Northaw tomorrow, and intend to be at Belton on Friday. My Wife desires me to assure you and my Sister that she joins most heartily with me in kindest love to you and my Sister. She has taken away from me her Father's Frank, and insists upon keeping it for the sake of its Contents, as well as its outside merits. My kind Compliments to our Contemporary, and tell Him I wish much to introduce to Him Jocosa Katherina Cust. Remember me to all your Neighbours who are so good to ask after me, not forgetting Mrs Lloyd of Plas-Power, whose valuable *Present of Dimothy* should certainly have been my waistcoat if I had not contrived to be married in a dismal day in the month of October. The Sun however now shines upon the Bride.

" Believe me, my dear Brother,

" Your most affectionately and faithfully,

" Brownlowe Cust.

" We should have been very happy at Newnham had not this Place been proposed by Lord Brownlow."

The danger of fire is one that cannot be too strongly insisted upon in an isolated house, especially one containing so much old woodwork as Erthig Hall. Philip was always beset by a dread of such a contingency, and it was evident that with his mind's eye he actually foresaw the scene, and incessant and emphatic are his warnings to the steward on this subject.

PHILIP YORKE *to his steward*

"JOHN CAESAR,

"As the days are now so much prolonged there can be no occasion for Candles in the Stables; and I do depend on you and everybody at Erthig for a constant care against the dreadful accident of Fire. I shall send down from Newnham an excellent Fire Engine and severall Bucketts and if I live to come down, I must see for a proper person to put the Old one at Erthig in order. You must write to George to enquire at the Wharf of every fresh Ship, that comes in at Chester to know if they have not aboard or have landed two large Matts for me. These Matts if come must be sent for from Erthig and they must be defended in the Waggon or Cart from bad weather. By another Post I will get the Bill of lading and send it you. . . . The Matts as they are costly and come from Barbary must be laid up carefully covered in the Smoking Parlour. Your Mistress desires by the return of the Post that you will on consulting Mary Rice let her know what Kitchen utensils are most wanted at Erthig. Dont forget also to consider, and to acquaint me of such things as possibly be at Newnham and may be wanted at Erthig."

"Northaw,

"*Nov.* 1, 1770.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"I shall wait anxiously to learn from S. Jones that the goods I expected by Water at Chester are safely arrived, and I beg either you or him will give me the earliest notice you receive. I hope in our absence you will have all, a general care and attention to everything but above all to be most careful of Fire. I think when you have occasion to write by Candle light, it would be safer and better you should have a Fire and table in the Steward's parlour. In your own Closet the Light is too

much mingled with Papers and must not be left even for a moment. And now I am on this Subject, it occurs to me a mistake I observed in the new building at Fabians. In the chamber over the new Kitchen a Fire place is made and the Beams placed immediately under the Hearth Stone. I spoke to H. Stephen to alter it, as those were done at Plasgrono. You will *see* it *is* done and in no case, in any further building, let the same mistake occur again. I would have you order (I suppose at Langfords,) the Saddler Geers for my four Coach Horses who will occasionally draw in the Team. Pray take pains in ordering 'em and if there be any improved manner of constructing such things, seek it out. I would have no finery or nonsense (which the saddler may perhaps think of) in the ornamenting of them but let the work be good; the materials substantial and seasoned, and the whole useful. Many things will daily rise up, and I shall be desirous once a week, to receive a letter from you (as well as the Cook's account to be sent up to your Mistress) with the general Heads marked of the business and conduct of the week. I have no reason to doubt either of your ability or Industry, but I love ever to have new and constant examples of it; and I shall be fond to hear of and about my Mill. I shall (when I go to London) consult on the subject of importing Corn and landing it at Chester. I would mean, I shall endeavour to make myself Master either of the Gain or Disadvantages of such a method e'er I enter on it. All letters which come (however directed) but under a cover with the name of *Cust* you may open at Erthig, as you may be sure they come *from*, and not to us. Your letters (will as usual) come under a cover directed to S^{r} Brownlow Cust, M.P. Northaw near Barnet, Hertfordshire. Always keep my letters near you as Memorandum till you have executed the business, and the commissions of them—at least, if my orders are suspended give me your reasons

Why, and Wherefore—This being the case there will be no necessity for a *repetition* of orders, which is of all things most offensive and disagreable to me. Pray tell me if you find satisfaction in the New Mill.

"Always I am your very well wisher,

"PHILIP YORKE."

"Northaw,

"*November* 16, 1770.

"JOHN CAESAR!

"Your letter which I receiv'd yesterday, brought an agreable account of my Mill, but not so of the House Establishment; which we must think a plan much too ample and extensive in our absence. Mary Rice will deliver to you your Mistress' orders which is to commence on Board Wages from Thursday next.—You will therefore pay the other servants (Sam Jones excepted, with whom I have an account and shall settle myself) their stated and usual Board Wages commencing as I said from Thursday next the 22nd Inst and my Household expences are then suspended. I am very glad you find your Mill Clerk so useful and I do not doubt you will keep him so in the full Extent. When any labourer behaves idly or impertinently dismiss him. It will save the Rest. I am concerned to hear of such sharp Floods. You must strenuously exert yourselves that no destruction falls on the Wood house, which work and precaution may prevent. I have no objection to your employing two more Hands to support the Banks, and works on the River only, so stipulate that my other Workmen don't give themselves airs or be induced to it. I do think 10^{d} a day sufficient and nothing shall induce me to exceed it. If workmen, two, will come at that price at this juncture you may receive them.—You say nothing of my Mare; whether she be sold or not. You know I fixed 16 Guineas on her but if 15 guineas be offered

you may let her go and I must stand to the loss of a Guinea.

"Your Mistress desires to know what quantity of Cheese is in the house. The Board Wages as I said must be usual and stated; the same as my servants were first put on when I first articled with them on that head in the beginning of the year 1768. Let me hear from you directed as usual once in every Week and speak particularly of the new Establishment when Settled.

"I am always,

"Your very well wisher,

"PHILIP YORKE.

"During the Frosts Worral should see the Ice house properly filled and if necessary an outer door made to it. I shall not forgive him if through any Childish prejudice and pride the Ice is suffered to be lost as it was last Year. Some one labourer should be appointed to the Care of it.

"I expect some Port wine to Pipe. . . . Sam Jones thinks it had better be set with the other two in the old Powder room. I hope there will be room for it otherwise I scarce know where it can be locked up. It must be set on a stil yard."

When all over the country things of interest, if not actually of beauty and value, have been constantly destroyed if the fashion or the immediate need of them had gone by, his descendants cannot be too grateful to Philip for revoking his order to destroy the "unuseful" things collected in the attic until he should have time to look them through, for many trifles of no value in his day have by the lapse of time assumed an unexpected importance. The "chardishes," for example, in which

his steward used to send his favourite delicacy when his master was absent from home.

"Ellesmere,
"*Feb.* 4, 1771.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"In conversation with my Landlord here on the Subject of Wheat, and its value; he tells me that the best, goes no higher than 6 shillings pr. measure.—I asked further what the Farmer would deliver for, within a mile (of this side) of Wrexham. He says he thinks he may engage that the very best might be delivered there at 6 shillings and sixpence a measure. . . .

"I would not have, upon Recollection any Rummage yet made in the Lumber Room; among the many old and strange things there, Perhaps somewhat on my view may strike my Convenience and therefore I wish, nothing should be parted with from thence till I have duly considered it.—I say this as I had before given orders, to pass away everything unuseful lying there. . . ."

Wonderful are the letters of Philip to his steward, sheet upon sheet of quarto paper in large clear handwriting; he was a just, but certainly an exigeant, master; had a telephone been at his disposal, eight and not eighteen years would have seen the collapse of "Jacky Caesar." But Caesar, unfaithful as he proved in greater matters, obeyed orders and kept his master's letters, and with these, some half a dozen or so from a very different correspondent, Eliza Ratcliffe, companion to Mrs. Yorke and a connection of Caesar's wife. She gives the point of view, if not of the servants' hall at least of the still room and the steward's parlour. "Be sure

and burn this let nobody see it," she writes, but he most fortunately either forgot or ignored her request.

ELIZA RATCLIFFE *to* JOHN CAESAR

"Park Lane,
"*Thursday* 5, 1771.

"DEAR MR. CAESAR,

"I Yesterday Received your kind Letter with an Account of the Butter ; my mistress, bids me give her respects to you and thanks you for the trouble she has given, says she does not doubt but it is good and would gladly have the other 33 : lbs. you mention sent as soon as you will, and she will take care to send the money either by me or the first opportunity. My Mistress likewise desires to be kindly remembered to Mr Caesar to whom also I beg my best respects. I think this is my God-son's birthday, tell him I wish him many happy returns of it, and I wish you both much joy thereof, give my respects to your Sister Sally, I will get the China for you both. So John has got the place at Belton, I wish he may Settle there and I hope he'll have a good place to his liking, remember me to them both when you see them. My Mistress likes her new Coachman very well, he is indeed very Sober, diligent and good natur'd and she is not afraid of his driving for he is very Careful and is improved, Betty Bevan sends her respects to you, and desires to know if Daniel ever offered to repay the money she lent him by your hands, but I fancy I might have sav'd the question. Betty Ratcliffe desires her respects to you, with thanks for your kind remembrance of her. Will you give my love to Nelly, I am glad to hear she is well and if you please Compliments to all my Acquaintance at Erthigg and accept the best wishes, of

"Your sincere and affectionate Friend,
"ELIZA RATCLIFFE."

PHILIP YORKE *to his Steward*

"Upper Brook Street,
"*July* 18*th*, 1771.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"I have very little time left me to write to you to-night, and yet I was willing to say that I was returned to London, and that you will now direct your letters to me as usual under Cover to Sir Brownlowe Cust. It is also material to say to you that I would wish you to enquire if Mr Ellis (formerly of Croes Newydd), means to sell his Seat in Wrexham Church, (the Seat adjoining mine). If he does I should desire you would immediately apply to him in my name, and say that I should be glad to treat with him as a Purchaser. I mean only that it should not be sold hand over head, without my having an opportunity of treating and coming to a price with Him. I shall answer all parts of your letter of the 5th of July by the next post. Your Mistress desires me however to say to you by this, that she would wish you with Prince to measure the old wrought Bed, the Head-board and Tester thereof only, not the whole dimensions of the bed, but the length and width of the head-board and Tester, as they are at present, with the Hollowings or Coves. We mean this to know how much Linnen it would take to cover them, and moreover to send the depth and length of the Valances.

"I remain, till the next post,
"Your very well-wisher,
"PHILIP YORKE."

"Upper Brook street,
"*July* 22, 1771.

"JOHN CAESAR,

". . . You must against the 12th August next send up to Newnham five Horses, a Man and a Boy, and

I will write my Orders in relation to them very distinct. On their Return to Erthig early in September they will answer a very good purpose to me and convey down a large load of Goods in a new and excellent waggon, which however having narrow wheels can employ but four of them. The Fifth horse will draw down a small Cart very well contrived for moving of Earth and which I bring down as a pattern for more. I shall also send down from Newnham Chains and Pulleys very well contrived for the drawing and raising large Peices of Timber and which will be of better and more permanent use with us than in Hertfordshire ; But to return whence I digressed. Five horses, viz. My Mother's two late Coach horses, Old Lion, Kicking Gilbert (I daresay you know the one I mean, a Horse very difficult to be shod) and Ball a Coach Horse of mine, These are the 5 pitched upon to be sent up. As I said there must attend the Horses a Man and a Boy. You know I can spare no one of my own people to this service and therefore cannot you pick out a man and a boy (both talking English within your knowledge of their Honesty and sufficiency, and not immediately at present in our Service). I am willing to allow two such Persons a shilling a day whilst they are travelling which will be 5 days and besides I will allow for their own Support upon the Road half a Crown a day the man, two shillings the boy. I like this matter should be exactly and precisely established, and in an early answer you will say what you have done in it. When the Man and the Boy come to Newnham they will be considered as Harvest men and receive the Pay of the country which is very liberal. . . . Your mistress desires before I conclude that she would wish you together with Prince to measure the walls of the Garret over the room that is to be her dressing room and where lumber is now lying and send her up word how much paper will be employed in papering it. It will be

papered to the bottom and there will only be a skirting board.

". . . When I was down the Dairy maid brewed and Samuel Jones approved of her diligence and readiness of spirit. I would not have her without her reward and you will give her half a crown as a mark of my approbation.

" When the tenants teams are carrying the stone, the servants who drive the teams should I think be treated with some bread and cheese and small beer. Let them have such refreshment with due economy and moderation and you will take out what cheese is necessary for that purpose and acquaint me what is used therein. You know when the whole is finished I mean them a more generous treat.

" P. Y.

" Your Mistress would be glad if John Jones could raise stock of young rabbits in the Warren against we come down, as our visitors are very fond of them and eat them often. You will tell him so."

On July 31, 1771, Philip announced to his Steward the birth of his first born son, Simon, and regulated the rejoicings which were to take place on the occasion. Then there is news of Dorothy—lonely, unhappy Dorothy, in her fine house in Park lane. " She will never recover her spirits," writes her humble friend. The last of these letters, signed E. Ratcliffe, is in a different handwriting and more sentimental style ; it is Betty " the little," not her aunt, who is scribe on this occasion. Ethelred, Lady Cust, did not long survive her sister Mrs. Vernon, whose death is announced in one of Philip's letters ; and then Elizabeth, greatly upset by her mother's death, came down with her husband and eldest son, Simon, leaving two baby girls in town. How often in her short married

life did Elizabeth undertake this weary journey from Wales to London! They did not remain long in their country home, for the second son, Philip, was born in London in June of that year. Elizabeth was an excellent housewife and manager, and when away from home issued directions about preserves, cheese, butter, and even the beasts that were to be killed; but she usually forgot to date her letters.

"Upper Brook Street,
"*July* 30, 1771.

"John Caesar,

"I am very happy to give you a good Account of your Mistress and my little Son.—They are both, I thank God, as well as can be expected. I would dedicate to this joyful Occasion a Hogshead of my Strong Beer; You will observe the orders I shall give about it. It is marked No. 1. Letter B in the Vault. As I would above all things avoid having my house crowded, or many People about it in my Absence, you will not give out that I mean any such benefaction, but only call in the workmen some day after they have finish'd their work and give them a quart of Beer to drink their Mistress' Health.

"If any Tenants should call in, or Neighbour's servants to enquire after us, you will give them a draught, and you may have some Bread and Cheese by you for the same occasion. But as I mean no Ostentation, you will be able to manage all this with great regularity, according to our desires; If any Ringers should come to ask for Money you will acquaint me in your next, but you won't put the thing into their Heads.

"I will mention what I have to say in regard to David Jones' quitting his Tenement in my next, by the following Post. You enquired very well in regard to the inoculat-

ing Nancy Davies. I agree with Mrs Myddelton that matter must be put off for the present.

"In regard to the Marling, we must do all we can before the Horses are taken away from you. If you can get two careful men at the price you mention, it will answer very well, and better than if a Boy had come. They will have orders to be careful, and yet not extravagant, in the case of the Horses. Geers must certainly come with them, but perhaps you had better not wear the new ones in this Jobb. You may send your Calf to the Best Market. You remember the Horses must be at Newnham by the 12th of August, and they must be 5 days on the Road. I think they turn off at Buckhill for Newnham, and go from thence by Owburn, 6 shillings and sixpence per day, the men paying their own expenses, is a fair Bargain.

"I remain, in haste, your very well-wisher,

"PH. YORKE."

THOMAS BIRCH *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Bond St.,

"*Aug.* 17, 1771.

"MY DEAR PHIL,

"I last night received a letter from your Mother, in which she tells me that her Servants and Lumber would set out as Yesterday in her Coach, and would reach London some time on Wednesday, but that she herself and Miss Myddleton, will set off in the Bath Post Coach on Wednesday morning and will be in Town at six o'clock on Thursday evening.

"Dear good Woman, she seems vastly flurried and flustered about moving, as indeed I have been all along afraid She would, and if she had not talked of coming with her servants in her own Coach, I did intend to have gone to Bath on Purpose to have escorted her up. She

seems in her Letter full of Apprehensions, but yet desires I would not trouble myself about her till I see her. I am determined not to wait till then though, for I shall go off tomorrow Morning, a little after six o'clock, in the Bath Post Coach, and so meet my Dear Friend half way at Speenham Lands, which will render the night more comfortable, for by Heavens, I cannot have a greater Happiness than at any time to give your Mother one Moment's ease since there is not one Earth one whom I so much Love and Esteem. If you want anything with the Grosvenor Gate Bundle of Keys, ask my Man and he will give them to you. After you and I were gone yesterday, Some Letters came from Downing Street, the Person who brought them took them away again.

"Do, my dear Philip, accept and make my most affectionate Regards to my amiable Friend, your charming Bessy. I do rejoice at the Thought of your being together again, although I hope and believe that the Repetition is needless, yet I can never finish writing to you without endeavouring to tell you how very affectionately I am your's,

"THOMAS BIRCH.

"P.S. I have enclosed this to Sir Brownlowe I hope right. My very Best Respects attend him and all the Family at Northaw."

ELIZABETH RATCLIFFE *to* MRS. CAESAR

"Newnham,
"*Thursday, September* 12, 1771.

"DEAR MRS CAESAR,

"It is so long since I heard from you, that I could not resist this (un-expected) Opportunity of inquiring how you and my good old friend Mr Caesar do; You Cannot think how I was delighted to meet with anybody that has seen him out, which the bearer tells me he did,

just before he left Erthigg. I should have wrote by Mr Jones, but I had not time. I suppose you heard my Mistress had Lodgings at Twickenham for three months, where we us'd to go, to and fro, every week, I hope the exercise has been of benefit to her health, though she has had some of her old Complaint, but she will never recover her spirits; I am sure; she has much pleasure in her *grand-Childs* being a Son. You will doubtless see him before this, Indeed he is a lovely Baby, as you will find, and I know will be fond of him, as would our Dear Miss [Anne] had it pleas'd God she had liv'd to see him, and Mrs Yorke both. I fancy there are great alterations making at poor dear Erthigg, so many fine things, will greatly add to its former beauty. We came withe Mr York here last Monday, which for my poor Mistresse's sake, I am glad of, as the Air, I hope, will do her good; she desires her love to you, and service to Mr Caesar and is always glad to hear you are both well, as indeed I am, to hear by Mr Yorke so good an account of my God-son, pray remember me to him, I think here is nobody of your acquaintance, but John Seal, and Thomas Lands, the former a piteous object, goes by a Crutch, and Stick, these many years, and is so deaf, he can Scarce hear at all, but very patient; the latter very ill-humor'd and Cross. I think you would hardly know Newnham, now the Cupola is taken down, and the house stript of its furniture, tho' here is still plenty of good things, surely Erthigg is very full at present, When I come down, I must go there to pack up my Mistress' things, for certainly they will want the Garret, I cannot yet tell exactly, when I shall Come, but before the Cold weather, I fancy. I long to see my poor Mother and Aunt and shall be sorry to leave my Mistress. Be so kind as give my best respects to any of my old friends, who are so kind to ask after me, if such there be. Betty Ratcliffe desires her love to you, she is much grown, since you saw

her ; I fancy you know that Richard, Mr Lloyd's man, comes to my Mistress in John's place, I hope he will do very well, for she is afraid of a Stranger. I fancy John will go soon after Richard comes, as he seems to want to be at home ; well, I think he will repent, but he says he is infirm, and can't see to drive, how does Jenny like it ? Be sure to burn this, and let nobody see it, but pray let me hear from you, and that soon ; and believe me to be, dear Mrs Caesar,

" Your very affectionate Friend,
" Eliz. Ratcliffe.

" Remember me kindly to your Sister, Betty Bevan desir'd me to return you her thanks for sending the money to Daniel. 'Tis pity they make no better use of it. I think she keeps much as usual, and looks pretty well for her age."

" Park lane.
" *October 9th*, 1771.

" Dear Mrs Caesar,

" I hope you are well. I had the pleasure of hearing by Richard that Mr Caesar look'd very well, which I was very glad to hear. My Mistress desir'd me to ask whether you had received the Saddle she sent by Mrs Yorke as she had never heard a word about it she fancied Mrs Yorke had forgot to give it, if you have had it pray let her know, for fear she should take it unkind. This much from myself indeed she is very kind and good to all her old servants and friends and I know has a great regard for you both, indeed she looks very thin, and I believe will never get over her heavy affliction, tho she endeavours all she can. I beg my best respects to Mr Caesar and both your sons. I am glad they have got Mrs Chaloner. I think her a very good Woman. I shou'd be glad if you would tell me how she is liked in the family. Mrs Yorke speaks well of her. I know you

are fond of little Master, he is a sweet child, the sight of him caus'd me many a tear but I am glad it is a boy. I believe Mrs Yorke is a very good natured Lady, there is now a large Family to what used to be. Be pleas'd to give Compliments to all the Maids and accept the best wishes of your sincere friend, and affectionate Humble Servant

"ELIZA RATCLIFFE.

"Betty Ratcliffe desires her respects to you. When did you see my Mother. I want to see them both very much. I hope to do it very soon, tho I shall be sorry to leave my poor Mistress. Remember me very kindly to both your sisters."

"Park Lane,
"*October* 31, 1771.

"DEAR MRS CAESAR,

"I received your kind Letter which gave me great Pleasure to hear you are well, and that my good old friend Mr Caesar is so much better in Health than when I saw him last, my Mistress was very glad to hear it, and also that you lik'd her small present. She is indeed very fond of, and good to all her old Servants and friends, says she does not wonder at your being fond of little Master, she prophecy'd you wou'd as soon as you saw him. We are very glad that Mrs Chaloner, is so well lik'd. I do think her to be a very good sort of woman and I hope will make them all happy. I thank you for your good account of my dear Mother and Aunt, I am thankful they are so well, I long so to see them and intend coming soon, I have so long said so that I am asham'd to repeat it, but having the agreable account of their being so well makes me delay it, for indeed I shall have a hard task to part with my good Mistress, and friend, She desires one favour of you which is to buy her some salt Butter, that which you sent last year was very good. I know not

who you had it off, whether the Man we used to deal with, or not, that used to be very good, if that Man has some, and if it does not interfere with Mrs Yorke (who she imagines may not buy any) My Mistress would be glad to have at least Hundred and a half; she does not Care of whom it is bought provided it be good, I dare say it will be dear but it is not near so good here, if you can get it either at Ruabon Fair or before, be so good as to send it in a bass as you did the last, by the Waggon, and let her know by a line, and send the bill in it. My Mistress would not have it Charged to Mr Yorkes, but as soon as she knows the Charge will send you the Money if you will be so good as lay it down for her, and says she will be much Obliged to you, dear Mrs Caesar, I will get your Cups and Saucers but they tell me China is so much advancd, as indeed, is everything else. Will you give my kindest respects to my Godson and Tommy, not forgetting poor Mr Caesar, My best love to Nelly, Compliments to all the Family at Erthigg (it is now very numerous) as if I named them, your Sister or any one kind enough to ask after me. Betty Bevan and Betty Ratcliffe desire their respects to you. I thank God they are well for I look on the former as a Child belonging to me. Oh pray, let me know how poor Ann Davies does, and how she goes on, Is any body appointed Porter instead of Old Price. Will you ask John Jones if he sent my Mistress 4 Partridges about a fortnight ago. Mr Yorke did not mention them and she is at a loss to know, but ask him privately. Oh how does Jenny approve of John's coming home, I am sorry he met with so bad an accident, will you give my Compliments to em and tell them Charles, is well and is very good. When you go to Wrexham be so good as tell Mary Jones that all her Daughters and their Family's are well. I call'd on Matty last Monday morning, she was very well and has a very fine girl. They have the House they are in, as soon as

she goes out and have Hertford St. I think it time to conclude. "So Adieu, Dear Mrs. Caesar,

"Yours affectionately

"ELIZA RATCLIFFE."

DOROTHY YORKE *to her son.*

"Park Lane,

"*January* 18, 1772.

"MY DEAR,

"I cannot keep pace with you and dear Mrs. Yorke in thanks for both your kind and bountiful presents. I was particularly pleased with the black puddens that came from Newnham lately, and am very glad to hear of that good woman being brought to bed of a fine boy, her husband by my desire wrote me word of. I am glad the oysters was good and that you all enjoy the Country so well at this season and that you now and then take the exercise of shooting. I am sure I fare well for it, but above all things I thank you for your garden ducks. I have not been able to write to my Daughter Yorke as I ought in answer to hers. Birch tells me he has wrote you word of my new Companion the Gout, nothing better have I to expect at my time of life, monstrous deal of pain I have endured from My foot, now easy but very weak. Poor sick Mrs. L—— and I occupy each side my parlour fire. You put me in some fright saying a cold had taken off the poor diseased Doctor, as she has a bad one at this present. Poor man, I think he is not to be Lamented. . . . I join with you in thanks to God for all yrs and family health and happiness. I hope your dear little boy will likewise have a good journey, pray give my blessing, love and service as due. My mind is rather distress'd now. I must some day next week part with my faithful friend. I see little of my young one good Birch, engagements thick so much upon him,

he is well and always affectionate towards me. . . . Saturday 2 o'clock. Your pet has just sent me word the weather is too bad for him to dine with me today, he like a snail fearful of putting his head out of his house but today he has an excuse for ever since it was light it has snowed. I daresay there will be great floods. I will not let the Ratcliffes set out till it is quite safe for their Journey, therefore I hope their friends will not fix any time for seeing them. They are if you will please to tell them both very well. Betty desires her duty to Mrs Yorke and will take care of the parcel she has mentioned.

"Adieu Yours

"D. Yorke."

Philip Yorke *to* Brownlowe Cust

"*August* 24, 1773.

"Dear Sir Brownlow,

"The very melancholy and unexpected Intelligence you sent us of poor Mrs Vernon's death, gave me sincere concern, and I cannot but see it as an unfavourable as well as most unhappy Event. It is a considerable Consolation however to find that our good Mother bears it with becoming fortitude and that hitherto there is no interuption to that glorious promise she makes us of a perfect Recovery of her health: I honour my Good Sister Cust highly for her conduct and extraordinary presence of mind which by your management was made so effectual. I quite dread to think of the consequences of your mother opening Mr Vernon's most injudicious letter; that poor Gentleman surely never calculates or considers of other's feelings. I must think his own in regards to others in this case wonderfully stagnated; But when I say this I am at the same time very much concerned for Him and do believe him sensible of his great los.

"I am become a sad idle Correspondent (and have now a sad arrear upon me) since my wife has taken to jaunting; I thank God it has agreed wonderfully well with her; and her Child and her, are both in excellent health. Pray make my kind love to my Lady and my Sister Cust and give Simon a parental kiss for me. I am sure I am greatly obliged to you for your great care of him and the extraordinary partiality you show him. I have the two Birchs with me from whom must not be longer absent than to write to you and my Mother alone line, My Bailiff Simkins last post applies to me to mention him to your Uncle Frank whom he says is about to part with his Agent; I rather doubt his Inteligence however he has behaved so well to me that if it be the cas I must get you to mention him to Mr Francis in case the Counsellor had a vacant farm by any accident he could even make himself more useful than an agent of more Letters: he would I am sure too be satisfied with a very reasonable stipend if he might live at Newnham. . . ."

"Betty" Ratcliffe *to* Philip Yorke

"Sunning Hill,
"*November* 17, 1774.

"Sir,

"By my dearest and best friend's desire I address this to you, to return her thanks for both your obliging letters and to acquaint you that according to the tenor of your last she means to attempt a Bath journey on monday next, in her own chariot with post horses, as the warmest method of travelling. I am sorry to add it seems a very necessary undertaking or her weak state of health would deter her from removing so far at this season of the year, her expedition will depend upon her power of performing the journey, as will her stay at Bath

upon the benefit she receives. Mrs Corbett has taken a small house for her, No. 2 Northumberland buildings, on the same footing as lodging, by the week. Mrs. Yorke desires her affectionate love to yourself, Mrs Yorke and all her dear little Grand children, and has great pleasure in hearing such promising accounts of them and has been much disappointed that her illness should prevent her the satisfaction of seeing Master Yorke, but we sincerely hope him and the young ladies will reach you in perfect health at Christmas.

" Mrs Yorke commissions me to beg that your bountiful present of a Hog from Newnham may be withheld this winter as she will not be in town to recieve or her cook to cure it.

" Mr and Mrs Pole Carew were married yesterday at Mr Yorkes in Berkely Square and came from thence to his House here, all the family that were in town were present at the ceremony (Lord Hardwicke, Lady Grey and Lady A. Polwarth are at Bath), the Bishop joined their hands. Mr Hartley a first Cousin to Mr D. Hartley and I believe Colonel entered his new habitation on Monday last, he has purchased Mr Pitt's estate at this place, is said to possess 50,000 is about thirty and has spent all his life hitherto in the East Indies. Mr Birch who has come to see Mrs Yorke before she goes to Bath desires his best love to you and Mrs Yorke. I shall be obliged to you, Sir, to make my respectful compliments to her with thanks for her last favor. My aunt desires to join in the same with

" Your most obliged and grateful
" humble servant,
" E. Ratcliffe."

Elizabeth's mother (Ethelred, Lady Cust) had a house in Brook Street, and here during their early married life, the young couple made their London home, contributing

to the housekeeping, as appears from the regular entries in Philip's pocket book.

But in January 1775 Lady Cust died, and Reddish the housekeeper wrote to announce the event to Philip's steward.

"Dear Sir,

"I am now setting down by your Mistress' Desire, she and your Master being in a hurry to tell you that my Dear Lady paid the Debt of Nature last Night, a little before twelve a clock, and poor dear Wooman has suffered verry much for this fortnight past that none that saw her but whished that the Lord would release her out of her Pain, which was great. You'r desired to acquainte Mrs Middleton and Mrs Davies, Mr and Mrs Birch and thank God that I can tell you that the Famaly are all as well as can be expected with the sittuation of afaires. I wright in great haste to save Post. I beg to be remembered kindly to all the good Famaly and to all inquiring friends.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your most Humble servant

"S. Reddish.

"Brook St.

"*January* 28, 1775.

"If you would call as you go by Mrs Jones, my love to them and tell them as above."

Philip Yorke *to his Steward*

"*January* 31, 1775.

"John Caesar,

"Your mistress thinks it will be a relief to her Spirits, since our late great loss to come down with me, to Erthig, and we propose setting out with Simon, next

Sunday morning, and hope to reach home to a late dinner on Tuesday. Betty Jones will accordingly get our own Room ready and laid in, as well as the Nursery and the Child's Bed carefully aired. As Mr Emes will be at Erthig on the 7th or 8th of Feb^y^ the same preparation will be made for him. We intend to omit the Board Wages whilst we stay and you must consider to put a regular stop to them accordingly. Perhaps if they End in the middle of the Week we had better Keep house for that time. As soon as I have done with Emes, I shall immediately enter into my Accounts to the Survey of the Timber and must be expeditious as my Question with Committee will come on early in March.

"We bring no maid servant, only James with us to do the horses.

"P.S. Your Mistress says she would not have the Nursery aired, but would have the little wrought Room aired, and one of the smallest beds in the nursery removed to that Room for Simon. Mr. Emes is to lie in the great Wrought Room. Your Mistress would have the Ox killed (if one be kept) a day or two after we come down and the Cook will provide other things necessary, till the Ox comes in, also put up a few Fowls and buy them in. . . ."

Mrs. Philip Yorke *to the Steward*

"John Caesar,

"I am much disturbed with the account you send of my loss among my turkies, in the first place. Mr York and I think the Workmen very blameworthy for offering to carry fowls out of the garden without first applying to you or John Jones, but of their own good will and I suppose with an intent of gaining a draught of Ale without any concern for our interest; you will make our displeasure known to them. I fear also that this accident

shews rather a want of care in my Kitchen maids and dairy maids for I doubt they did not know—of my poultry Yard. I desire you will tell them that I would have them [ ] a very exact account of all my fowls to Fabian and you will be good enough to write it down for them and also to add as they increase. If they had had the number this matter would have been more easily settled, however I wish you to go over to Sontley and endeavour to satisfy Mrs. Robarts that the turkies are mine by evidence of the people who are best acquainted with their Turkies. If the white ones either of them are in the number of the stray ones I should think you might claim them peremptorily without any affront as I had only the Cock and Hen of that sort and I believe there are none of the kind in the country. I would not have them lost for a good deal as they were a present to me and I have no chance of getting any more. But all this affair you will conduct in the civilest manner. . . .

"*Saturday, April 4th.*"

"I am very well pleased with my last accounts. I began to think my dairy very backward, hope now it will continue to flourish daily. I should be glad to know whether there are any Calves fed now with the milk and how many of the New Cows are come in, whether the old Ones are in full milk. When the Cheeses begin to be made I wou'd have you send the number that we make a Week and also the Weight they weigh then, though the Weight is not to be entered in the Dairy Books till the year following. You will also take care when the cheeses are made that they make some Wey butter for the use of the family and for the Dairy if you manage the Wey right so not to have any waste. Mr. Yorke says you intended to get some pigs by that time to eat it up. As Mrs. Caesar can not possibly give any of her attention to the Dairy I must desire that you look

over them very much at this time as things not attended to in the beginning are quite lost. I have look'd over the accounts of the expenses during Mr Yorke's stay at Erthig and approve it very much. I am much concerned to learn your father is so very indifferent.

"I am, Your well wisher,

"ELIZABETH YORKE.

"*May the 13th.*"

"CAESAR,

"You have been so regular with my dairy accounts that I have not much to say but what occurs to me. I am glad of takeing the opportunity of sending by this post as Mr Yorke writes. In the first place I wish my dairy to produce more plentifully. The quantity of butter does not sound much for 8 cows. I wish there may be a good reason but I rather fear some of my cows are going off. I did not hear when the last cow came in what became of the calf. I would have you put down the price of the butter when it is potted in the same manner as when it is sold as it must all be charged to the Dairy account. I shall want my books up in a month for Mr Perigrine to look them over. I should be glad to hear how the Poultry get on and what method they are kept in and the quantity of eggs sold pr. week or fortnight. I am glad we have got so many little Pigs, they must be taken great care of as the sows of that breed are generally reckoned bad nurses, we wont have them all saved. . . ."

"*June 22d*, 1775.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"I hear with concern of the hurt you have Received on your Collar bone; am glad however to find that it is not broken, and that in these busy times you are able moderately to move about: I am afraid you are rather impetuous in your motions, and at this season of

the year, and at your season of life you must carefully avoid by violent or hasty Exercise, putting your Blood into a ferment; and in your diet, and living, should at this time be very temperate, and the rather extraordinarily so, from the florid Health and natural strength of your Constitution. I was very glad in your Return of the last week, to find that you had had more showers, and I understand by J. Jones' letter that yesterday fortnight, (the day after I left you,) you had an extreme heavy Rain of three hours. You did not speak particularly of this, nor say whether it created a flood; you know I am very anxious after these particulars. By Mr Strong's letter which you have enclosed me, and which I have answered, I understand he has complied with the request of the Parish, and has appointed John Cross the Clerk. As this man is somewhat among the rest, indebted to my Interest, I hope he will be diligent in your directions to him, to keep the Pews clean, and (if he has a Chest,) to lock up the Cushions of my own Seat, having well brushed them, at such time as the Family is absent, and that in regard to the Monuments, he does no more to them than to brush off gently the dust or Cobwebs with a Fowl's wing, or such gentle thing, and that he does not officiously wash them with water, or use soap, all which would ruin the polish and delicacy of the marble. I would have you gravely communicate these Instructions to him early, and tell him that if I find them regularly obeyed, I shall make him an annual present.

"Speaking of the Church, the question of Tythes naturally occurs and by an ancient and authentick Paper, I think I trace the origin of the Parson's acceptance of the eleventh instead of the 10th Cock. It was usual, (as my Document says) in Queen Elizabeth's time, for the Farmers not to bind up their Corn in sheaves, but directly as they reap'd or mowed it, to put it into Carts, and convey it into their barns.

"When the present improved practice came in, the Parson certainly stipulated to accept the Eleventh sheave, and the Farmer prepar'd and bound it for him with the same extraordinary Labour with which he did his own, as an acknowledgement for the same; Consequently, if the Parson will insist upon the 10th, he must take it according to the primitive use, but you understand that if we do not agree pr Acre for the Hay, with Mr Strong, I do not mean but to make it for him for the present.

"I hope you continue careful and a good Manager in the article of small Beer, and see that the door of the cellar is kept lock'd, and the key never entrusted into improper hands. I am not willing to believe that the Brewer makes it stronger in my Absence. If he did, and you detected it, I am satisfied you would see it with the greatest, and a proper indignation, and acquaint me of it, as well as any advisers or Encouragers of such a scheme. I have suggested this the rather, as the small Beer that came to my table when I was last at home was particularly noted for strength, and I desire for the greater security you minutely attend the Brewer, and see that he produces an adequate Quantity of Liquor for the Quantity of Malt, and that the small Beer be of no increased strength whatever to what it was in my Father's time, and the usual order of the house. Any irregularity of this sort surreptitiously creeping in, must be attended with the worst consequences.

"My Wife, I thank God, and the Children, continue vastly well.

"I remain, your Friend and Well-wisher,
"PHILIP YORKE."

Charles Ebbrel, formerly coachman to Mrs. Simon Yorke, was a real link with the past, for his mother, at first laundress to Mr. Meller in his London chambers, became afterwards housemaid at Erthig. She married

the coachman, and "the second whip" (referred to in the following lines) was presumably the said Charles. Her portrait with its rhyming dedication is one of the oldest at Erthig, and known to the family as the "Mother of us all."

To dignifie our Servants' Hall
Here comes the mother of us all
For seventy years or near have passed her
Since spider-brusher to the master
When busied then from room to room
She drove the dust with brush and broom
And by the virtues of her mop
To all uncleanness put a stop
But changing her house-maiden state
She took our coachman for a mate
To whom she proved a useful Gip
And brought us forth a second whip
More over this, oft when she spoke
Her tongue was mid-wife to a joke
And making many a happy hit
Stands here recorded for a wit.
Oh, may she yet some years survive
And teach her grand children to drive.

PHILIP YORKE *to his Steward—Extract*

"*June* 13, 1777.

"If Charles Ebbrel means to offer me his services in a serious determined Resolution of fullfilling his duty, and continuing in his place and of being *sober*, *honest*, *clean*, and *diligent* therein, I shall then encourage him to come to me; but if it is only to exchange a hard and laborious living of very uncertain profit for one of more Plenty and less Fatigue, and he is to follow the evil and idle Examples of his London Brethren of the Whip, I do

then desire for his good and my own, that I may not take him from a more innocent Situation. Tho' I am not used to speak very often and on trifles, I shall not the less narrowly watch his Behaviour, and shall soon be able to judge of his Merit or defects. For very obvious reasons I do not mean to give more wages than what he had under my Mother: I shall give a pair of Boots and a great Coat once in two years, a full Livery and a working Jacket every year with a pair of Leather breeches, and if he follows me to London I shall give him perhaps an additional Livery, as my Servants have lately had, but this is altogether in my option. . . ."

"Garstang,
"*June* 28th, 1778.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"I am got thus far very well on my Road to Whitehaven which I find I shall not be able to reach till Sunday night or Monday morning, nor will the Militia I understand be there much before. I write at this time more particularly on account of Daniel the lodgeman. If that fellow takes to drink he will lose his Eyes. I hope he does not love it better than his Eyes. The common application externally will be of little service to him. I would spare him one week, and allow him his pay not withstanding, if he would go over to Flint in the full tide and bathe and drink the Water. You should send a note with him to say who he is, perhaps you may know somebody at Flint to consign him to. If it is not possible for him to go I desire that in that Case he may take four doses of salts, an ounce to each dose. I would have Richardson mix the Salt in plain water, and buy it pure at the Apothecary. The mornings he take the salt, he must stay at home till they have done working. It would be dangerous to go into the Dews or heat himself till they have done working. . . ."

"Mary Port (near Cockermouth),
"*July* 17, 1778.

"John Caesar,

"To be sure you must not be without money at this time and therefore I enclose you £60 at the same time that I am obliged to live by London draughts, as well as you, for our pay from the 25th. of last March to this time has been all consumed in the Expenses of the march of the Regiment here and in the present the Captains mode of short clothes to the men so that whimsically enough, the Subalterns have been the only part that has Received any money and it is better it should be so. The men behave very well, and come on in their Exercises. I have not much to say and indeed very little time to say it in thro' the necessary business here and the several letters I have to answer. However I know your diligence and discretion will make amends for my silence and supply everything which I may omit to order [ ] in the last month have been terrible. I believe I may depend on Keen looking after the stables, as I can on you, and Betty Jones to the House in that respect. I am sure in these days of increasing distress you will attend to every principal of good management and you should among other news of that kind attend to the small Beer that there is no waste from improper People getting it and that it is always brewed of a decent and reasonable strength. I recollect nothing more, and conclude with assuring you that I am much your friend,

"Philip Yorke.

"J. Jones as usual should send the Judges some good fruit."

II

The letters of Frances (the second wife of Sir Brownlowe Cust) have no real connection with Erthig. They

are included in the Chronicle because they were found there, and are really too good not to be made known. Those of the governess, Mrs. Pollen, from the same packet are evidently written after the well-known receipt. "Epistolary writing she and her friends considered as her forte. Many a copy of many a letter have I seen written and corrected on a slate before she seized the half hour just previous to post to assure her friends of this or that." *

Letter on Wedding Tour from FRANCES, *second wife of Sir Brownlowe Cust, to her Mother*, MRS. BANKES.

"Belton,
"*February* 3, 1775.

"I had the pleasure of receiving a few Lines from you my dear Mamma yesterday, and take the first opportunity of thanking you for them and of informing you of our safe arrival at Belton last Sunday after a most agreable journey, but before I enter into any particulars relating to that, I must entreat you to excuse my remissness upon a subject I most full intended entering upon in my last, and tho the hurry in which I wrote that, (after supper from the Inn at Bakewell) my imagination engross'd by the journey and the places I had seen prevented my mentioning it. I assure you I did not forget it *last Tuesday* allow me therefore now To express my sincere wishes for many happy returns of that Day, accompanied with Health and happiness and be assured my wishes are not less fervent for being thus late in reaching you—to continue the account from my last, on Sunday morning all went to Chatsworth where we were soon made acquainted by the gardner as a secret that the Dutchess miscarried the day before, was but very indifferent and

* Miss Deborah Jenkyns in "Cranford."

FRANCES LADY BROWNLOW
Pastel portrait at Belton, Lincolnshire

the Duke very unhappy about it, the man express'd himself very odly " not that such a thing signifies for *once* but her Mother being so often in that way makes it alarming." The House I think is a very good one tho' not well furnish'd but I recollect having heard you mention having seen it I think, some of the Servants were sprinkled at the Willow Tree, which I suppose is the General Custom. I cou'd fancy the lively Dutchess would enjoy wetting some of the Ladies and Gentlemen as *fine sport* we dined afterwards at Matlock which is a most Charming romantic Place and as I have curiosity to see everything we went into a Lead Mine which to be sure is very dirty, but I thought it very well worth seeing, as it is surprising how they cut such a prodigious way through the Rock and to see the Spar hanging on each side the passage is very narrow only room for one, and each a candle in our hands. We saw another House belonging to the Duke of Devonshire at Hardwick a very old Castle built by a Countess of Shrewsbury and in which Mary Queen of Scots was kept prisoner it gave one a very high Idea of the Magnificance of the old Times. There is a Gallery 60 yards long and a number of very fine apartments quite as they were in time of the Queen the furniture not alter'd and as you may imagine bear visible signs of antiquity about them, we were extremely favor'd by the weather and I had a very pleasant journey. I must conclude abruptly as the Carriage waits begging you to present my Compliments to all the family were you are and believe me

" ever your most Dutiful and affectionate daughter

" F. Cust."

" Belton,

" *Fryday, Sept.* 26.

" My dear Mamma,

" Tho' there is no Post from hence to-day, I cannot resist taking up the pen to express my sincere

wishes to you for many happy returns of this day. I often reflected this week how agreable it would have been, cou'd I transport myself to Southampton and enjoy your Company during Lord Brownlowe's absence, who with Dr Cust took their flight into Wales last Monday, to attend the Wedding * yesterday at Erthig, Mrs R. Cust being likewise left a Widow, has been so good to give me her Company here, and with driving her in the Curricle of a Morning and visiting Grantham in the Afternoons, we have endeavour'd to pass away the time of their absence, but I have great pleasure in the hopes of seeing them again this evening, as they intended leaving Erthig as soon as the Marriage was over ; and if possible to reach home this Evening. We are going to Tea at Grantham, in expectation of a happy Meeting, which I hope to have the satisfaction of giving you an account of tomorrow. At present I must lay down the pen, being told the Carriage waits, but I could not omit assuring you that you were not absent from my thoughts on this day.

" (Sunday). I had not a moment's leisure for writing yesterday. The Dr and Mrs Cust were with us in the morning, and we dined and spent the evening at Grantham. Lord Brownlow and the Doctor arrived Friday, about seven o'clock. They left Erddig about Thursday. The Marriage was about nine in Mr Yorke's Chapel, the Party present, Mr and Mrs Yorke, Miss Kelly, Lord Brownlow and Dr. Cust ; and the Bride and Bridegroom. They all behaved very well ; very few tears shed. After the Ceremony was over, they went to Breakfast at a Dairy House of Mrs Yorke's, and when Lord Brownlowe and Doctor set off on their Journey home Mr and Mrs Yorke, and Mr and Mrs Reynardson went to Ruthin, a place about 15 miles distant from Erthig, to dine and spend the day. They are to spend a month together at Erthig, and then Mr and Mrs

* Anne Cust to Jacob Reynardson.

Reynardson are to make a visit to the Old Gentleman at Holywell.

"I had some hopes of a letter from you by To-day's Post. Perhaps tomorrow may prove my wishes. The Venson, I hope, arrived safe. It was not so fat as I could have desired, but one part of it, we had, was thought extremely good. The Party at Grantham desires to be particularly remembered to you. Lord Brownlow joins me in kind compliments, and best wishes.

"Believe me ever your most affectionate Daughter,*

"F. BROWNLOW.

"P.S. Miss Cust and Frances are quite well."

"Belton,

"*Thursday, December* 21, 1775.

"MY DEAR MAMMA,

"I was agreeably surprised this Morning at Breakfast with your letter. I should have wrote to you yesterday to acquaint you of our safe arrival at Belton but not rising very early and going to Dinner at two o'clock at Grantham, it really was not in my power we had a very pleasant journey (*un peu froid* but I have not suffer'd from it) and got to Grantham a little after one o'clock where we had the satisfaction of finding all the Family in good Health Lady Cust in spirits and looking much better than when we left her *little* Ethel grown a *bouncing* Girl we brought her Home yesterday she is in charming spirits and says she was very Happy at Grantham yet she is very glad to come home to Papa and Mamma. I am much obliged for the Patterns I have not yet determined about them, Lord Brownlow says he saw a Lady at Court last Sunday with a white Gown on that had velvet stripes which he admired very much and shou'd like to see some patterns of that kind if you will be so good to send to King to send me some Mr *Sime*

* This letter is out of its place, being of later date than the others.

admires Wimbledon extremely thinks it very pritty place, and particularly commends the Green House and that all the Plants look in perfect health, the Hot House he does not so much approve of—I enclose you the Frank you desir'd and shou'd be obliged to you when you write to say I desired my Compliments to them I quite forgot about the *Brawn* when I sent you the Packet but will settle with you about it when I return to town With kind compliments to my Uncle and Mrs Cuchow I remain my dear Mamma's affectionate Daughter

"F. Cust."

"Belton,

"*Saturday, December 30th,* 1775.

"My dear Mamma,

"Many thanks to you for the Letter I had the pleasure of receiving from you this Morning, by which I am sorry to learn it was so long before you received my Letter which I wrote two days after my arrival here, but I fear I retarded it by having it directed to Savile row where I thought it wou'd reach you before you left Town, as you mentioned staying a few days to see the Duenna I shou'd have wrote today had I received one from you to give you some account of our entertainment at Mr Hobbard (Hobart) last Wednesday, we dined here at one o'Clock and set off before two for Nocton, which is twenty Miles distant from Belton we arrived there about six o Clock just before the Play began : it was the 'Provoked Husband or the Journey to London' and most of the parts extreamly well performed. Mrs Hobbard* was very great in Lady Townly Mr Sutton (all but an unfortunate smile on his Countenance most of

* Celebrated as Albinia, Countess of Buckinghamshire, for promoting the Picnic Society, an amateur dramatic and musical club. She was also notorious for her gambling propensities and was caricatured by Gillray in "Faro's Daughter."

the Play) did Lord Townly very well. Lady Grace was performed by Miss Bertie Mrs Hobbard's sister, and Master Hobbard was inimitable in Squire Richard, and an excellent John Moody by Sir Charles Buck—and all the rest of the Characters well supported, the entertainment was the 'Gardian' in which Mr Hobbard made an exelent pert Chamber Maid, Mr Berkely (a brother of Lord B's) was a most compleat Maccaroni (but indeed the Character was *too* natural) and Miss Bertie did Harriet charmingly, after the Play was over we had a handsome Cold Collation and then a Ball. I danced a little with Lord Buckley and before two o Clock set off for Lincoln ten Miles distance and arrived there by the light of Lanterns and Flambeau's, the next day after seeing the Cathedral we returned to Belton, much pleased and entertained with our expedition.

" I was last night at the Play at Grantham the Miser and the Waterman very tollerably performed for stroling Comedians Miss Cust came to us last Sunday she desired to return her Compliments to you—I desire you will present mine to Lady Blakistone and the young Bart—I have not yet received my silks from King, when I have I will let you know if I fix on any, or trouble you to see for more as you are so good to give me Permission, will it be agreable to you to go with me to the Drawing Room on the Birthday ? I have not engaged with anybody and shall be happy to go with you. We have had fine Frosty Weather lately. I walk out every morning and think I am much better already for the Country and hope to recover *my Fat* against I come to Town again, I have had a letter from Dolly, she says her mother has had a return of the gout I know not when I shall have time to Answer her for what with Walking, going out and Company in the House, I have very little leasure for writing, if you should see Miss Edmondstone I shou'd be obliged to you to give my Love to her and

tell her I have really not have time to write to her which she begs me to do Sir Brownlow joins with me in wishing you my Uncle and Mr C the compliments of the Season the same to Lady B and believe me my dear Mamma's most affectionate Daughter

"F. Cust."

[Undated.]

"My dear Mamma,

"As I was obliged to be so laconic in my last I cannot resist sending a few lines with the enclosed, which came this morning with one for me from Mrs Pollen. I had likewise a letter from Cuckow, and an account from Belton of my dear little girl's continuing perfectly well.

"I mentioned in my last that we were going to Wynnstay, we stay'd all night, and returned yesterday to dinner. Sir Watkin was so obliging to have the Theatre illuminated and shew'd us all the Scenes of which there are great variety, and extremely pritty. I should have liked very much to have been present at the Plays, which have been perform'd about a month ago, in which Mr Yorke was an Actor, and Garrick a spectator. There are to be Plays again at Christmas, in which Mr Y. is to have a part. Sir Watkin takes great delight in the Stage, tho' I find he is but a moderate Performer and Lady Wynne never acts herself. We went one day last week to Chirk Castle, which belongs to Mr Myddelton, who is at present at Bath, and perhaps you are acquainted with; his lady was Sister to Sir John Rushout. It is a very fine place, we drove round the Plantations, and over the Mountains, from whence there is a charming wild romantic view. I have been once on horse-back behind Lord B. and liked it very much, but fear I shall not get another ride before we leave this place, as the time draws near for our departure. Friday is the day fix'd

on, and we are engaged out to Dinner tomorrow and Tuesday, and have a scheme in view for Wednesday, should it prove fine.

" I condole with you on the loss of the poor marron Gown, but do not know how it is possible to supply its place, without any expence tho' if I recollect right, it was not of great value. I am told the Heads are to be very low this Winter, that the Duchess of Devonshire has already lower'd her's considerably ; but I conclude you have the fashion in perfection at Bath.

" The Family here join with Lord Brownlow in best compliments to you ; and believe me ever,

" Your most sincerely affectionate Daughter,

" FRANCES BROWNLOW."

At the Theatre. Wynnstay.

On Thursday, January 15th. 1778. will be presented, the MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Shylock.	Mr. Bunbury.
Antonio.	Mr. Yorke.
Bassanio.	Mr. Griffith.
Duke.	Mr. Apperley.
Gratiano.	Mr. Aldersey.
Lorenzo.	Mr. Smith.
Salanio.	Mr. W. Cotes.
Gobbo.	Wilkinson.
Launcelot.	Carter.
Jessica.	Mrs. Lloyd.
Nerissa.	Mrs. Puleston.
Portia	Mrs. Cotes.

with a Prologue.

To which will be added " The Mayor of Garratt."

THE MAYOR OF GARRATT.

Mayor Sturgeon.	Mr. Carter.
Sir Jacob Jollup.	Mr. Smith.
Bruin.	Mr. Griffith.
Lint.	Mr. W. D. Cotes.
Heel-tap.	Sir Watkin Williams Wynn.
Jerry Sneak.	Mr. Aldersey.
Mrs. Bruin.	Mrs. Lloyd.
Mrs. Sneak.	Mrs. Puleston.

To begin precisely at six o'clock.

N.B. No person to be admitted without Ticket, which may be had of S. Sidebotham at Wynnstay.

On Friday, "The Wonder," and "The Author."

"Belton,
"*Jan. 25th.* [Not dated.]

"MY DEAR MAMMA,

"I was in hopes that this Morning's Post wou'd have brought me a Letter from you, but I fear by your silence my last has not reach'd you; the Letter you receiv'd on Wednesday shou'd have arrived the Tuesday, and one I wrote of the Sunday shou'd have come to your Hands on the Wednesday, but the Snow has made such a jumble of things in general, that there is no dependance on the Post. I mention'd our intention of staying a fortnight longer here, our departure is now fix'd for next Monday, the Weather permitting, and as Sir Brownlowe has some business at Overstone, we purpose taking it in our way, and staying there till the Friday or Saturday following, you will make me happy in sending a few Lines there, as I think it long since I had the Pleasure of hearing from you, the Direction is Overstone, near Northampton.

" Mr Peregrine and Mr Francis Cust set off for London last Monday, we have heard from them that the Roads are in many Places very indifferent ; in some Parts were they have dug out the Snow to make a passage, it is so narrow as to be impossible for two Carriages to pass ; but bad as it is, we shall be rejoiced if it does but continue a few Days longer, as a sudden Thaw will make our Journey more disagreeable, and to Day threatens us that will be so.

" I conclude you have seen Lady G—— Head in the Papers ; we have had two descriptions of it, one with the Name at length We hear the Drawing Room was very thin. I hope Mr Cuckow is convinced by this time that we are in our Senses by not having attempted coming to Town when we had so good a motive as paying our Compliments to their Majesties. Pray tell him I shall think him out of his princely if he finds fault now. Sir Brownlowe joins me in best respects to yourself and kind complements to my Uncle and Mrs C and I remain

" My dear Mamma's

" most affectionate daughter

" F. Cust."

" *Jan.* 26, 1776.

" My dear Mamma,

" The Weather has at last determined us to give up all thoughts of the Birthday, as we have such bad accounts of the Road, and have so bad a prospect of the Snow falling much more tonight that shoud we attempt setting of for London tomorrow, it is more than probable we shoud not reach Town till after Thursday, but may be detained some days at an Inn, which woud be very disagreable, not to be able to proceed or return to Belton. All these things considered, we think le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle, and that the difficulties we have incur'd and may possibly not be able to surmount turn

the scale against the Birth Day and the Gown which I regret infinitely more than not going to Court, as I am not passionately fond of Finery and shoud not have bought for any other occasion. However I hope it will not tarnish and it must do some other time. I cannot say now for certain when I shall hope for the Pleasure of seeing you, but I believe in Ten days or a Fortnight, but you shall hear again from me soon, and I trust you will favor me with a letter before long. I wrote a sad scrawl last night which I suppose you have received, just to tell you that my motions must be entirely regulated by the Weather, lest you should be surprised at our not being in Town on Tuesday, as we purpose, So accept the Compliments of Sir Brownlow and Miss Cust, and be assur'd of the affection of your sincere and affectionate Daughter,

"F. Cust."

Fragment of a letter from Mrs. Pollen

"This walk hath brought us near the dinner hour. After dinner to our devotions till Tea time. Then in the Grove again from whence we are just now returned, and I once more have taken of my Cloak and walking Shoes to converse with you. If they call me away any more, this letter cannot possibly set of to night. The Post leaves us at Eight, Mrs S is one of the most extraordinary women I ever knew, I dont know a vice she has unless it is her keeping too great a distance from her Servants to whom she never speaks but when she gives them orders. No not even to her own Maid, who never dresses nor undresses her. In the morning she comes in to her room to open her window shutters, and retires. At night she attends her Lady with a Candle to the Chamber door and withdraws. On particular occasions she dresses her hair : She is very charitable to deserving

objects. She never speaks of anybody how guilty so ever they may have been, and still are, but with compassion, always making allusions to the happiness of those who are exempt from these failings. She is religious without fanaticism, and altho' a Presbyterist she hath nothing of that whining canting manner with her that generally distinguishes those of that Sect. But is lively and cheerfull and loves to see her Children so, and is never happier than when the study is over to see them merry; as they are naturally shy and reserved. In her Dress, and that of her Children nobody would imagine they were the largest fortunes in Scotland. Which makes her so exceedingly anxious, that they must never be left a moment alone nor speak to a Servant but they should be informed by them, what they will be entitled to when they are of age. For that reason her coming into the Country had no other motive than to live retired, to improve her daughters in learning, and so far to follow the fashion not to be in the Metropolis in the months of August and December.

"The journey to Weymouth was no sooner resolved upon, than abandoned again, on account of there being too much company. For now that we are at Tunbridge she will not go to the rooms nor suffer her daughters to go there, much less to a Ball. We are to walk but seldom on the Pantiles, but up the hills and in the Groves. So that I shall stand but a very bad chance of either seeing Lady Roseberry, Lady Lindley or Miss Tyrrel, whom my dear Lady Brownlow says are yet at Tunbridge. Mrs S never plays at cards and her Daughters' scarce knows the names of the different Games which they compose. At eighteen Miss S is to make her appearance in the great World (She is but just fifteen) and she does not approve of her Daughters marrying very young their not being introduced into Company till they are eighteen will give them sufficient

leisure to distinguish proper objects with whom they are to pass their days. In short ma Chere Lady B neither time nor paper will permit me to divert any longer on that subject: I hope soon to hear from you. I suppose you will accompany the Amiable pair and family to Brighton oh were I there, I might now and then have a peep at my beloved friends, I am sorry to hear that Mr Henry's doubtful health is the chief motive of that journey. I hope it will have the desired effect Embrassez votre amiable Fille et ses petits pour moi je vous prie mes respects a My lord

"Jai l'honneur d'etre votre tres fidelle et Affectionee
"Servante
"R. POLLEN."

"London,
"*Dec*r 20, 1776.

"DEAR LADY BANKES,

"I intended to have had the honor of writing to you last week at the same time I wrote to my dear Lady Brownlow, had it not been for a most tiresome Job that prevented me, the cutting out of linnen and the preparing it for the Sempstress which hath took up several of my much prized evenings, but as I am got pretty well over it I can no longer defer informing me after your Ladyship's Health which I hope is perfect.

"I make not the least doubt but you have enjoyed your stay at Belton with the utmost satisfaction; for being 'avec votre aimable Fille,' Il suo caro Sposo et la chere petite Mademoiselle Fanchon it is impossible (knowing your tenderness for the lovely Trio) but your Ladyship must have been compleatly happy. Not so with poor I, who hath no sweet Lady Brownlowe nor Lady Bankes to go and visit, no Caro Sposo to comfort me, no Piccola Signorina Fanchonnetta to dandle and observe her growing Beauty, no pretty Miss Cust to

stand by my side and prattle and make her remarks on her little Sister. It is true I have my sweet Miss Montagu and that is indeed a Comfort.

" But what else have I besides ? Changeable Foggy, Rainy Weather. (That I suppose your Ladyship hath no better than I.) Dirty streets, Dull Walks, Dull employments, and in short everything that is disagreable, and was I inclined to L'Humeur noire, I should certainly grow low-spirited, which is a disease I am very little acquainted with, and forbid it my Stars I ever should.

" But I don't consider that I am only prating here of myself, tying my ear to nobody's tongue but my own. As the Duke of Northumberland in Henry 4's time said to Hotspur his Son.

" A propos. Her Grace the deceased Dutchess of that name was interred last Wednesday Evening in Westminster Abbey with the greatest privacy imaginable to the surprise of a great many people as several imagined from her Grace's Magnificence in all things when living, her Funeral would have been one of the most Pompous that had been seen for years. So that many were disappointed. Her Grace hath left among many other Charitable Legacies 300 Guineas to the Necessitous of 5 different Parishes.

" The Fast of last Fryday was exteriorly observed here with all the Solemnity imaginable, not a Shop open, nor an idle Person to be seen in the Street. I fasted too with great devotion on Fish, Dieu me le pardonne, but I prayed heartily for the success of His Majesty's Troops in America.

" Lord H. went to Court dressed in deep Mourning Black sword and Buckles, to accompany the King to the Chapel, and went afterwards to Fast at a Gentleman's House where there was about a dozen more invited for the same Pious purpose. A certain Lady was neither Clothed in Sack-cloth, nor cover'd with Ashes unless

some ignorant people mistook the quantity of Powder in her Hair for that penitential covering, but had a large Congregation in the evening where very devoutly Kings were prayed for, Clubs and Spades were invoked, no doubt as instruments to punish the Rebels with. In short, Madam, the day was passed to the satisfaction of every one's Conscience some impious Butchers excepted, who have great malice and hatred in their hearts against the Fishmongers.

"But, joking apart, the Churches were all very full, and I hope if there were but five just and righteous people to be found among so great a number, their prayers will have the desired effect of a blessing to His Majesty's Arms.

"But I fancy that by this time your Ladyship is pretty well tired with this nonsensical scrawl. I hope next time I shall perform better. In the meantime let me entreat you to present my Love and Duty to my dear Lady Brownlow whose health, I hope and wish, is entirely re-established. I intend writing this same post to her Ladyship, but fear much I am rather too late to enclose it this evening. My respects, if your please, to Lord Brownlow compliments to Miss Cust, et un Baiser a la carina Signorina Fanchonina. Miss Montagu sends her love to you and all that is dear to you.

"I remain, Madam, your Ladyship's Dutiful and Affect Servt.

"R. Pollen.

"P.S. Many happy Years, Days, Hours and minutes attend your Ladyship and Family in the ensuing years."

III

Never sadder morn rose grey on Erthig Hall than the last day of January 1779. The winter snow lay in

winding sheets upon the hills, the storm winds tore frantically on shuttered casements, and gentle Elizabeth, deaf at last to the little voices in the over-full nursery, fell asleep to wake no more in this world.

Ὃν φιλεῖ θεός
Θνήσκει νέος

Those the Gods love die young: Elizabeth was not yet thirty years of age, and in eight and a half years seven children had been born to her—frail blossoms, only two of whom reached maturity. Every one loved Elizabeth, not only her own family, but all who were drawn into the sphere of her gentle influence. Little as she resided at Erthig, her memory lingered long in the country-side; "she was always spoken of as the most elegant and beautiful woman, and her death was a subject of much regret." Half a century later Frances Lady Brownlow adds her tribute to "the sister I deeply loved and lamented."

Sweet Elizabeth, with her grey eyes turned away pensively from her admirers, ever fair, ever young, stands to-day in shepherdess' dress and lightly powdered hair by an artist's hand. Once she strolled over the green lawns, fed the peacocks from the terrace steps, carved her initials on a giant beech tree and, rustling in silk and brocade, withdrew with her companions when the red wine circled round the polished mahogany. Then she died, and her husband, in his darkened library, entered in the family Bible the brief but affecting statement of his loss.

"Erthig. January 31, 1779, Sunday, this day, at twenty minutes past one, to my irreparable loss and very

just and great affliction, my most dear and honoured Wife. Elizabeth Yorke departed this life, having nearly completed her 30th year; being born on the 24th. of February 1748–9 and married to me July 1770."

Strong common sense and minute attention to detail were characteristic of Mr Yorke, and there is no more remarkable instance of this than the instructions he wrote down for his wife's funeral.

January 31, 1779.

Orders for John Caesar, concerning the Funeral of Mrs Yorke.

Mr. Yorke understood from good Authority, that John Jones the Plumber did not deal fairly concerning the "Leaden Coffin" that he made for the last Miss Yorke [his sister]. This action was passed over by Mr Yorke as it was too delicate an Affair to stir in; but it is not forgotten: and it becomes of more necessity for Caesar to look very sharply into all such things, as his Master cannot in this melancholy case help himself at the time or complain afterwards. Mr. Yorke depends on Caesar's Assurance and Fidelity; of which he has never had reason to distrust; and hopes it will be exerted in his Master's present very afflicted and distressed situation.

Desires that the measurement of things necessary may be proper and *by no means straitened.*

There should be some well seasoned Boards brought to make the shell Coffin tomorrow, they may be of a light but durable kind. There must likewise be some good stout oaken boards bought to make the Outward Coffin, that is to be covered with black cloth and made strong. Mr. Yorke desires there may not be any glazing Ornaments but all the furniture Black, except a small silver plate (which may be had from Mr. Ratcliffe at Chester) on which is to be Engraved

Elizabeth Yorke, wife of Philip Yorke, Esq. of Erthig.
Born Feb. 24. 1749, died Jan. 31. 1779.

Caesar must examine the vault early tomorrow and see if it will hold three more coffins to those already there. If it will, no occasion to look further at present. If not, Mr. Yorke will give further orders. The Vault to be immediately bricked up again after examined.

Mr. Yorke means to allow Five Guineas for Mourning to the following Persons; and wishes they would supply themselves from Mr. Thomas Lloyd accordingly.

Nelly Caesar
Mrs. Thompson,

Mrs. Richardson,
Mary Rice,
Betty Thomas,
Betty Jones

Mr Yorke does not chuse the other maids or men should be put into mourning but means to give them a small token.

Mr Yorke desires Caesar to accept £5.5.0 for mourning.

To John Newns Five guineas.

To John Jones (gardener) five guineas for mourning.

Caesar had better make it known to the tenants that they are not *expected* to attend as Mr Yorke thinks Company and entertainments highly improper on these Melancholy occasions.

Particular care to be taken by Hugh Stephen that the Flat Stones and Iron Rails are laid by in order to be replaced and the Children &t. prevented from getting into the Vault.

Mr. Yorke would have Caesar, Newns and John Jones go in one of the coaches. Four women in the other, the Family Coach to follow Empty but to bring back some of the Attendants by the nearest road. The Funeral to go through Wrexham on the way to Marchwiel. The men mourning to have gloves Hat bands, the Clerk to have Gloves and hat band. Mr Yorke's coachman and footman attending to have gloves and hat bands.

The Women Mourners to have Gloves and Scarfs.

Mr Strong to have Gloves, Hatband and Scarf.

The Bell at Wrexham to toll as the funeral passes through the town.

The bell at Marchwiel must Toll but not to be kept tolling all the time till the Funeral.

The eight carriers of the coffin to have gloves, hatbands, 2 Horses to attend. An Atchievement must be painted from the Arms in the Coach with this Motto only 'Remember ' To be painted in Chester.

Mr Yorke would have Caesar agree at Wrexham for a hearse and two mourning coaches (with one pair of horses to each) to be at Erthig at ten o'clock exactly on Saturday morning next, the 6th of Feb^{y}, but if the Hearse and Coaches are not proper at Wrexham must be sent for from Chester. As there can be but one coach would have six horses and the hearse.

Mr Strong must have due Notice.

Mr Yorke would not have any of the tenants invited to the Funeral nor other persons nor would he have any preparation for Entertainment of meat or drink made at Marchwiel or Erthig beyond what is commonly necessary wishing everything to be conducted in the most decent but private and affecting manner possible.

Caesar is to give Mr Strong at the Funeral 5.5.0 guineas wrapped up in paper and half a guinea to the Clerk.

Mr. Yorke would not have either the Pew, Pulpit, Desk or Communion table hung with mourning, of which Mr Lloyd should be informed early.

Hugh Stephen and proper assistance should be attending that the vault may be made up again in the course of Saturday.

Caesar to give particular orders to have the dimensions of the Gallery Window taken and have it so contrived that the Atchievement may be fastened to the woodwork of the window frame and to see it fixed up himself with strict orders that they do not wound the stone work by driving in nails, hooks or spiking into any of the joints or any part of the stone work. N.B. If any difficulty in fixing up the Atchievement on the Window frame it may be made easy by nailing accross the upper part of the window some planks of wood to fasten the nails to but not to let the boards appear from under the Atchievement.

Feb. 3. Mr Yorke did not intend to put the following Maids into Mourning thinking a Gratuity would be more acceptable but as it is represented to him to prove otherwise, desires the following would supply themselves with necessarys immediately from Mr Lloyd's and Caesar to give them Three Guineas each.

Jane Nurserymaid.
Betty Housemaid.
Molly Kitchenmaid.
Nancy Scullery maid.

In the nursery at Erthig when their sweet mother was taken from them, were six little children, including the baby Dorothy, who cost her mother's life. Two of them at any rate, Simon and Ethelred, being eight and six years of age must have been old enough to mourn their loss. A pastel portrait by Catherine Read of this pretty pair hangs in the little Chinese boudoir on the way to the Chapel. To reach it you pass through another tiny room hung with French tapestry (the tapestry of which the lost portion was found by Simon Yorke when "looking for his Aunt's hat"). In the centre is the famous blue Delft jar, and between the windows, John Meller's plate glass writing table, with the coat of arms.

Of the four sons born to Philip and Elizabeth, Simon the elder grew up to succeed his father, Philip died in infancy, John while at Rugby school, and Brownlowe, Rector of Downham, Isle of Ely, at 36 years of age.

"Her three daughters," says Nimrod, "being the only young ladies in the neighbourhood who received a London education, having been for some years in a school in Queen Square (the Miss Stevensons') of great celebrity in those days, were looked up to as pattern cards by all the other young ladies in that part of the country who had not had similar advantages. The eldest Miss Yorke was the most elegant young woman in the circle in which she moved, and as amiable as she was elegant. She fell a victim to consumption at twenty five years of age." Her sisters Elizabeth and Dorothy also died young and unmarried.

Philip had a great sense of responsibility towards his motherless children; his salient characteristics come out in his instructions about their diet and clothes. He was a busy man, spending much of his time in camp with his militia, and could indeed have had little pleasure in the house, whose empty spaces whispered back the name of his lost love. But they were well cared for in servants, ponies, toys, clothes, and visits to the seaside. His pocket-books tell of presents for birthdays and Xmas, "pouches" for the school boys, dolls for the girls. The dolls' house they may have played with stands in the long gallery, and gentle ghosts, their maiden spirits, haunt, in fancy, the scene of their earthly playground. Alas! the cruel waste of young life in those days! Anne, and Elizabeth, and in the next generation Ethelred, Elizabeth and

Dorothy, carried out to the Churchyard ere the golden days of youth had grown grey! The old house, with its darkly panelled walls, the clocks remorselessly ticking out the ebbing sands of time, and the coffins borne heavily down the shallow oaken stair!

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed,
Oh precious hours! Oh golden prime!
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold
Those hours the ancient time-piece told.
"For ever—never!
Never—for ever!"

Have there ever been any lovers at Erthig Hall? for there has been only one young bride among the daughters of the house.

It is a remark too trite to be even worth recording how terrible were the ravages made by small-pox before Lady Mary Wortley Montague, in the early half of the eighteenth century, brought the art of inoculation from the East. Philip's children and servants were inoculated, but in spite of every precaution his daughter Dolly did not escape the fell disease. They were not robust children; little Philip had passed away in infancy, and his father thus announces the fact in a letter to his steward, "I have been put into such extraordinary distress at the sudden and unexpected loss of my little boy Philip, and at this particular circumstance of my wife's health, that I cannot collect myself."

John, the third son of Philip and Elizabeth, was delicate; the allusions to him in the letters almost always

concern some trouble with his eyes, and the only real record of his short life is that given by his neighbour Apperley. "The two boys had a vehicle dignified by the title of 'the Royal Mail,' this name figuring on the coach itself and the collar of the dog that accompanied it. The body of this unique machine had been procured by young Yorke from his father's coach builder, the wheels begged by Apperley from the steward of Wynnstay, the harness picked up anywhere and everywhere." One of John's brothers contributed a pony, warranted quiet in harness, and with Apperley's more frisky steed attached tandem-wise in front, off went the "Royal Mail." Its daily journey was to Marchwiel Rectory, carrying newspapers to the Rector, Mr. Strong. Once it was upset, at a time, moreover, when it contained two lady-passengers, and on one occasion its sole occupant, Miss Yorke, frightened at a thunder-storm, fell into hysterics, to the unutterable dismay of coachman and guard. The partnership which lasted for two years was dissolved by the death of John at fourteen years of age.

"Ormond Street,
"*March* 9, 1779.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"I thank God we had all a safe journey and arrived here yesterday at 12 Noon. I shall not write long to-night being kept up till two this morning in the House. What I chiefly have to say is that my little boy John may begin to drink his Asses milk, that Keen may milk it in time and that I may know how it agrees with the child, and here I hope in regard to the situation of the Asses, care may be taken as to all new planted things, a caution I am sorry to see eternally necessary to repeat.

I would have a pot of Charr that was left sent up by the Waggon and it may come at the same time with some other goods that I shall direct to come by the waggon, in my letter by the next post. I beg that you will say to Betty Thomas that I would have no strangers admitted into the Nursery, so much do we dread the small pox and other infectious diseases. She will particularly remember and I know she will exact in our wishes what Mrs Reynardson said in regard to the matter if any Ladies of the Neighbourhood come they certainly cannot be refused seeing the children, and we must trust to their discretion not to bring improper children with them; during the Fair the Garden is the best exercising place for the children and during any time of great Resort to the woods and walks without."

In December 1779 died Anne Lady Cust, great grandmother of Philip's children. In the words of her biographer "her old age was much saddened by losing so many of her family, not only had she mourned over her husband, two sons and two daughters; but she had also survived both her brother, two sisters-in-law, her brother-in-law Savile Cust, her daughter-in-law Ethelred Lady Cust, her granddaughter-in-law Jocosa, Lady Cust, and a granddaughter, Elizabeth Yorke, to whom she was greatly attached;" truly she might say, her years were many and full of heaviness. Philip with his usual good sense forbade all needless show of mourning. He spent his money not on swathes of evil smelling crape and bombazine, but on seaside lodgings and such-like advantages dear to young folks.

PHILIP YORKE *to his Steward*

" Belton,
" *December* 28, 1779.

" JOHN CAESAR,

" After a short but rapid decline, we had the Misfortune to lose old Lady Cust of Grantham, yesterday. I would have my son John put into a grey suit of Cloathes with black buttons ; My other little Boy and Girl, need only have black silk Sashes, and a little black Ribbon about their Heads ; no alteration in their linnen will be necessary. I wrote so fully yesterday that I have nothing to add.

" I am, much your Friend,
" PHILIP YORKE.

" None of the Children will require Black Stockings, as Simon here will continue to wear his usual Coloured Stockings. John should have a pair of black Buckles. I have no doubt but you are as usual very careful of Fire and particularly in frosty weather."

" Worley Common,
" *Aug.* 15, 1781.

" CAESAR,

" So soon as the High Sheriff has left Erthig, and things are set in their places again, I wish the Children to go for three weeks to Parkgate ; and to accommodate them in that matter, you must first go over there, and agree for proper Board and Lodging ; If old Betty thinks she cannot manage the three, (tho' I understand Mrs Reynardson that she thinks, she may,) then her Daughter must attend her. Besides sufficient Bed-Room, (and a very cooling diet,) the Children should have the use of a lower Room, in which they may play, and change the

Air. The enclosed you will give to Mr Crew as directed ; It relates to the Propriety or not, of my Daughter Dolly's going, tho' if the small pox is not in the place, of which you will on your previous visit enquire, I think the Sea-breeze and change of air will be of great service to her. As to her Bathing, I have great doubts on that head : Indeed if she were to be left at Erthig, I fear old Betty Thomas must be left with her, and there would be a great difficulty whom to send with the Boys.

" When you have previously settled everything at Parkgate, and the day of their arrival there, I wou'd have Green attend old B. Thomas and the three Children in one Chaise, there. If it is thought proper that young Betty Thomas should go, Green must take her behind him. Green and the horse may return to Erthig, and be sent at the End of three weeks to bring them back in the same way again. As Betty Thomas passes Chester, I would have her take my Son John to Dr. Haygarth and take his opinion about his Eyes. At the same time she might ask him some general directions about the manner they should be dieted. She must be provided with a Guinea to give the Doctor, and I shall be glad to know what opinion he gives. If I have omitted anything in these directions, you will supply it from your own sense and Experience.

" I wish now the Children to get there as soon as they possibly can, consistent with what I before mentioned, tho' I think that Bathing in reasonable cool weather, is much better than when the Season is exceedingly Hot. Captain Gartside has money in his hands, paid therein by my Paymaster Sergeants for the purpose of liquidating Serg[t] Thompson's debts : If Lewis will send me an order signed by himself to receive that money on his part, I will do so, and account to him for the same. I wish John Jones to send old Mrs Mainwaring some Fruit

when the Children pass Chester. Is Mr Apperley's barn finished ?

"I am much your Friend,
"PHILIP YORKE.

"I think of going to Margate next week; Enclose your next Return in the Cover sent with this."

Extract.

"Worley.
"*Sept.* 14, 1781.

". . . We expect this Camp to break up (barring of extraordinary accidents) about the 26th. of next month, and I shall then get leave to come immediately down to Erthig, spending only a couple of days, in my way, at Newnham. But my intention is not to stay above ten days or a Fortnight at Erthig but shall return there again, sometime before Mrs Cust and my Children come home for their Xmas. holidays. It is not impossible that my kinsman, Mr. Yorke the member for Cambridgeshire, may call with his Brother Mr. Charles, at Erthig towards the middle of next month. If he can do so, he will give you a few days previous notice; and in that case of his coming I must get your Wife to provide a handsome Entertainment whilst they stay, which I conclude they will make very short, and Betty Jones will take care, of course, of their Beds. Some Port and White wine must be had at the time from Woollam, that I hope he will answer for. Moreover it is likely likewise that Mr Spranger with Sir James Lake, may spend a day and night at Erthig. If they should, you will have due notice, and Nelly will take the same care of them. Pray tell her I am very much satisfied with her management on the late occasion and thought the entertainment at the same time that it was economically given, very

proper, and handsome, and I had a very obliging report and acknowledgment of it from the Sheriff himself.

"I remain here very well and much your Friend,

"PHILIP YORKE."

"*June* 29, 1782.

"CAESAR,

"As soon as Mr Crew has determined the time of my Daughter Dorothy's setting out for Grantham, You must consider the most proper means of getting her there; The one-horse Chair must take her and the elder Betty Thomas, and they must be attended by Green; Could not Rocket draw the Chair to Grantham, by the way of Derby, and Nottingham, in four days, (I think the whole distance being about 116 miles,) and might not (under such easy Journeys, or they might be made still easier, if necessary,) Green ride by the side of Rocket with a Rein, on Simon's Horse: Green must leave the Chaire and Harness at Grantham, which I long since gave to Mrs Cust with the Horses and return to Erthig, leaving Betty the Child and Chaise.

"I shall have your opinions of this matter by the return of the Post, but I have told Mr Crew that as little time should be lost as may be, in getting my Daughter to Grantham after the necessary measures of Physic subsequent to the Small Pox are concluded. . . ."

War and rumours of war, these are the dominant notes of the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The war of Independence was raging in America; Norway, Russia, and Sweden were formed in a league of armed neutrality against England, and Spain, united to France, declared war. Philip, like many another loyal gentleman, raised militia levies from among his tenants, received no pay, incurred much private expense, and devoted all his

energies to organizing his country's defence. Newspapers were now fairly abundant, and people no longer depended on private letters for public news; still it is curious that these numerous letters contain so few allusions to these stirring events. In spite of his manifold occupations the squire of Erthig found leisure for gentler pursuits, and some four years after the death of Elizabeth went a-wooing a pretty widow and near neighbour, Mrs. Meyrick, née Wyn. The event is foreshadowed in a letter to Caesar in June 1782.

Extract

"I would have John Jones once in the Week send the best basket of Fruit he can from time to time collect, to Mrs Meyrick at Abergeley; Perhaps he may get Pigeons from the Dove house at the same time, and he may continue to send at the same time, the finest Vegetables; These with the Fruit, he will pack very attentively, and they must be sent by a careful Person in Green's absence, and if you can, you must spare a Cart Horse, or hire some other. If Henshaw wishes to be restored, he must get your Mother or some other Person of Character to say a word for him in the shape of a petition to me. Tell J. Jones he need not send any more Fish to Mrs Meyrick: Those he did send were very good."

A very charming woman was Diana Meyrick, but like her namesake of "the Crossways," singularly incapable of managing her own affairs. Her devoted friend and man of business, Mr. Lally, made unavailing efforts to restrain her, but to little purpose. She continued at great expense to add on to her family mansion Dyffryn-Aled, and encased the front with Bath stone, a needless

and, as it proved, useless outlay, since the imported stone has not endured the ravages of time nearly so well as the local variety used by Philip for Erthig. But wanton extravagance ran through her daily life. "I am shocked indeed to see such a string of debts again," writes Mr. Lally, "and the more soe since so many of them are for common expenses which must constantly return and must be paid for out of your current income. You must indeed attend to expenses before you incur them. I have not any [money] even for current charges, nor know where to borrow any, nor indeed would I wish you to increase debt, for though your building is nearly finished, the money you last borrowed was more than you ought to have taken up. Pray calculate your expenses for the last year as soon as you get home and see whether it is not greater than your income. You will be ruined before you know it, pray read this on Sunday when you say your prayers."—In another letter he writes thus: "I was sorry to overhear a conversation between some Welsh gentlemen the other day when it imported that your house if finished was fit for an Estate of 10,000 a year and that you lived at the rate of 4000 and that if you had a son he would be ruined if he used more than half the house. I fear there is too much truth in these things tho an exaggerated narrative."

"I wish more for the value of imprinting it on your own mind than for my own curiosity, you would send me an abstract of the last years receipts and payments. . . . I take as much liberty with you as I would with a sister or daughter as I trust to your good sense and good opinion of me to impute it to as sincere anxious and affectionate regard as could be felt for such near relations."

Poor Mr. Lally, his relief was unfeigned when his fair client became the wife of his friend, Mr. Yorke.

"Kings Road, Bedford Row,
"30 *Oct.* 1782.

"DEAR SIR,

"I most heartily congratulate yourself and Mrs Yorke on the completion of that Union which I most cordially hope and firmly believe will occasion a Life of happiness to two friends of very long standing for whom I bear a most sincere and friendly regard. My wife and self feel much pleasure in the thought of soon paying our personal congratulations." . . .

Philip himself was, or thought himself, very much in love when he wrote this:

"Erthig,
"*September* 7, 1782.

"MY DEAR DEAR DEAR LADY,

"A thousand thanks for your very kind letters to which I shall attend in every respect. I hold my Ground, to be with you, at Dyffryn to-morrow sen'night. In the meanwhile, I return your Horse with a Haunch of Venison which will you be so good to forward to Mr. Holland at Conway by a Messenger of your own, mine returning here on foot. My daughter Dolly reached me in charming health before dinner to-day, and left all her Lincolnshire Allies well. My visitors wait for me.

"Entirely and ever affectionately yours,
"PHILIP YORKE."

Diana and Philip appear to have gone to London for their honeymoon, and then visited Erthig on their way

to the bride's home at Dyffryn-Aled; and the new Mrs. Yorke, untidy in person as she was in mind, mislaid various possessions by the way. Poor Diana, she was beautiful, (her portrait was painted by Gainsborough, and there is a replica at Erthig Hall,) amiable, generous and affectionate, if not over wise, and when her charms were on the wane, Philip, in ponderous elderly-gentleman fashion made fun of her for the entertainment of his friends. A tribute to her goodness of heart is the farewell letter of her friend Mrs. Owen, (which comes in later,) and it is impossible to look at the sweet, melancholy face in the widow's weeds, (when the picture was painted she had just lost both husband and child,) without feeling sympathy with her, in spite of her foolish, and no doubt often very aggravating, ways.

PHILIP YORKE *to his Steward*

"JOHN CAESAR,

"I wish you to go to Mr Lloyd and tell him that if he will be so good to send me forty pound by you, I will give him a draft for the same on my return to Erthig next Saturday sennight.

"Your Mistress would have Nelly Salisbury look out her White Negligee Sack, and the Hoop she wears with it also a pair of White silk shoes, and the Blue leather ones and the old laced Ruffles that she used to wear with it, if they be at Erthig, also a black pair of dropp'd Ear-rings and a necklace of the same. I would have you, on my part, bring me over a pair of black satten Breeches which you will easily find without disturbing the other things, among the packages lately come from London that enclose my new Cloathes. These several things you may

easily bring over by having a little Portmanteau, and male pillion to John Jones Horse on Friday next.

"I am much your friend,

"PH. YORKE."

The relation between Philip and his son Simon was always a charmingly intimate and confidential one. A single generation had done away with much of the old time formalities; and Philip, with his genial, happy temperament had too much common sense to be jealous of his heir. Simon was thirteen when he wrote these letters, and very good letters they are. He pictures in a few words a country Election, naïvely remarking he "had never seen one before," and takes an intelligent interest in the improvements to the estate, his father having evidently consulted him on the subject. History repeats itself; Philip had at very early age demanded "his silver-laced waistcoat" and taken an interest in the cut of his clothes; now it is Simon asking for "lace frills and ruffles" and "the sword or hangar" which was part of the picturesque Eton "Montem" costume. There was joy in the whole family when he obtained his "remove," an event which the great "Head" himself also condescended to announce. No doubt libations in the "tuck" shop celebrated the event, for Simon, who in October had not over-run his allowance, in November makes an ingenuous appeal to his stepmother, which, knowing her character, as Simon did, must certainly have been favourably responded to. His father also on this occasion sent him half a guinea, his Uncle Brownlowe a whole one, so the young gentleman enjoyed his Xmas holidays without a qualm as to next term. Brownlowe

was the kindest of uncles, and Belton a second home to the Yorke boys. The weary monotony of coach travelling must have been considerably enlivened by the prospect of being held up in the December dusk by a masked highwayman, pistol in hand; and for Simon and his brothers, travelling from Windsor to Wrexham, special arrangement had to be made as they passed through town. Sometimes it was good Mr. Birch who secured their seats in the Chester Fly; at others, Eliza Ratcliff who, having arrived, armed with an ample provision basket, waved a decorous farewell from the Inn yard.

SIMON YORKE *to his Father*

"Grantham,
"*April* 15, 1784.

"DEAR PAPA,

"I write to let you know that I have had a very pleasant holidays with my Uncle Brownlow at Belton, and as he was so good as to take me away a week before the holidays, he will send me at the return of them. I came here time enough to see the Election at Grantham, and after having walked the Town with my Uncle Francis, I saw him and Mr Sutton chaired, and as I never saw an Election before, I was very well pleased with it. I went to Mr Newton's Shop, with my Uncle and Aunt Brownlow, which is a very pretty place, I dined this day at Grantham with my Aunt Lucy, and my Aunt Richard, as my Uncle Brownlowe dines with my Uncle Francis at the Election entertainment, and afterwards will walk to all the Public Houses, to thank them for their votes. My Cousin Cust, and my Cousin Francis came here last Saturday to spend their Easter Holidays.

"Pray give my Duty to my Mama, and Love to my Brothers and Sisters, my Uncle and Aunt Brownlowe,

and my Aunt Lucy join in compliments to you and my Mama, and I am, dear Papa,

"Your affectionate Son,
"SIMON YORKE."

"Eton,
"*May* 10, 1784.

"DEAR PAPA,

"I am much obliged to you for your kind letter, which I received last Saturday, and it let me know of your coming to Town, which if you can make Montem in your way, I shall be very glad, as it is on the first of next month, and, I believe, will agree with your time of coming up. I have been very regularly to Fencing, since I came from Belton, where I had a very pleasant Holidays with my Uncle and Aunt Brownlow. Pray give my Duty to my Mama and tell her I will promise to write to her soon. I am glad you have got the Shop, as it is the Best of the two at Abergeley. Give my Love to my Brothers and Sisters and all my Friends. And shall be very glad to meet my Sisters in the country. I greatly approve of planting the gravel Pit, as also the twenty Tribes in the old Billiard-room. Miss Harris sends her Compts. to you and my Mama, and I am, Dear Papa,

"Your most affectionate
"SIMON YORKE."

Simon had the good fortune to be educated at "the best of schools," where, unlike his father, he appears to have stayed out his full time. From Eton he proceeded to St. John's College, Cambridge, where he took his degree.

"Eton,
"*May* 24, 1784.

"DEAR PAPA,

"I have asked Miss Harris about the sword, and she can not get me one, so that I must trouble you to do

it, and a hanger, if you can conveniently, also lace for Frilles and Ruffles. As for the other things, Miss Harris can get them. Pray give my love to my Grand-Mama, and compts. to Mrs and Miss Ratcliffe. I had a walk on the Terrace after I saw you, and saw the King there. I hope you was not caught in the Shower on your road,

"and I am, dear Papa,

"Your most dutiful Son,

"SIMON YORKE."

"Eton,

"*June* 28, 1784.

"DEAR PAPA,

"I hope this will meet you and my sisters in good health after your journey and that you will find my Mama and my brother and sisters well. Mrs Cust came here for two or three days and brought me your Letters and as you blame me for not writing to you, I took the first Opportunity of letting you know I was well. We had a very bad day for Montem., our holydays begin on this day month. When I write a letter to Mr Birch I shall let him know it in proper time that I may not be delayed as I was last time. I should like to be with you at Abergely but I am afraid I shall come too late for that. As I have nothing more to say at Present.

"I remain, dear Papa,

"Your most affectionate son,

"SIMON YORKE."

"*October* 17, 1784.

"DEAR PAPA,

"I write to let you know that I am in the Upper School, and have won Kenrick's place. Pray tell my Mama that I should write to her, only as you understand the removes better I will refer it to the next. Mrs. Harris had a letter from Mrs Cust and my Uncle Perigrine

is much better. I expected to have leave to my Grandmamma but as I have not I suppose she is not very well or else gone to London. I wish very much for the Xmas holydays when we shall all meet together, as to my bill at Charters which you complain of in your last letter is not unreasonable as I have not run over my Allowance in tea, nor doe I have any which is unnecessary. Pray give my duty to my Mama and love to my brothers and Sisters and all my Friends.

"I am, Dear Papa,

"Your affectionate son,

"SIMON YORKE."

THE HEADMASTER OF ETON *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Eton,

"*October* 17, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,

"As you seemed by your Letter, with which You favoured me on your Son's return, to be very anxious about his Remove, I am unwilling not to give you the satisfaction of knowing. He succeeded Yesterday, and took his place in the fourth form with a degree of credit. I have no reason to think he will not prove quite equal to that course of business, as he shows an earnest wish to get on properly and has really sufficient application. I have the pleasure to add he is perfectly well. I dont find him at all inclined to lose any lessons of Fencing, but I will take care to remind him of it.

"I am, Dear Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"HUMPHREY SUMNER."

What a privilege it would have been to have been acquainted with that excellent man Mr. Thomas Birch! shrewd, businesslike, yet with a keen sense of humour,

and such a warm heart for his friends. Now-a-days, when the sound of the aeroplane is ever in our ears, and the sight so common as to cause only the mildest curiosity, it is amusing to read of his awe at the first sight of a balloon.

In his pleasant, joky manner he thanks Philip for a present of woodcock, and then he almost breaks down over the picture of Dorothy, to whom he has always been like a son, making her lonely journey from Sunninghill to Bath.

Extract

"*October* 22, 1784.

"I was amongst others to see Blanchard and Sheldon go up in their Baloon, it was really an awful sight to see two Baloons mount the skies and take the wings of the wind relying on a machine so liable to accident and that would precipitate them to the earth and dash them to pieces, to see them mount bowing and kissing their hands with as much ease as if only getting into a Phaeton is truly surprizing and shows the curious and daringly adventurous spirit of Man. I thank God they are safe on land.

"Tom Birch."

"Bond Street,

"*November* 24, 1784.

"My dear Friend,

"I return you many thanks for three couple of excellent Cocks. I never in my life eat better so says Hobbs and the Captain who are now drinking your Health and join me in kind respects to yourself, my Good Friends and all your little Folk. The Captain declares that once more in his life you have furnished him with Cocky enough, I laugh and joke you see but upon my word I am not in good spirits, nor shall I till I hear of your Dear

good Mother's safe arrival at Bath. She sett off from Sunninghill on Monday last. I went thither on the Thursday before to hearten her up for the Undertaking. She kept her Spirits up well till she was getting into her Chariott which was painful to her and she said she was sure she could never get through the journey and should never see me again, in truth it affected me so much at the same time that I know there was no reason for it, it was unfortunately a muggy wet day. . . ."

From BROWNLOWE FIRST BARON BROWNLOW *to* MR. PHILIP YORKE

"DEAR BROTHER, "22 *July*, 1784.

"Your letter was very acceptable and gave us all here great pleasure by informing us that you and Mrs Yorke were well that you had returned with your children safe and well, and that you were agreeably fix'd at the Sea. You are very kind in your wishes to hear of us, who are at present well and a happy Society having all our children at home and they all perfectly well: the Misses from Portman Square I trust enjoy themselves very much, the novelty is added to the pleasures of home, for they have been at Sea the two last Summer Holidays; they ride upon their Pillion every morning, but are aspiring to a side-saddle, which has been some days bespoke and is to be used, not here only, but also as I believe, at the Riding-House in Town, for Ethel at least: at Grimsthorpe t'other day I saw Lady Mary Bertie, who is exactly Ethel's age, riding extremely well from having learn'd in London.

"My friends in Town have been very indulgent to me in giving constant accounts of Pere's health and his Ilchester business; about the former I have great anxiety, and about the latter I have much more fear than hope but very little anxiety, for there can be little satis-

faction in representing a Borough which like Sodom and Gomorrah has scarcely a single righteous left in it; out of the Witnesses examined two of those call'd by his opponents have had Bills found against them for perjury, and a principal one call'd by him has been sent to Newgate for Prevarication. These circumstances must have harrassed Pere: more than was fitting in his ill state of health; it is therefore a relief to me that they are coming to a conclusion, and by letters to-day I am to expect news of the final determination to-morrow. Mrs Lucy Cust is still with Mr P. Cust, so that the House at Grantham is at present the resort only of Workmen, and our Family society is reduced to ourselves and children, but we have a very agreeable third Person in Miss Gage whom you saw in our Company at Barnet. Our publick days began last Friday, you know how we People of Lincolnshire visit far and wide, and you will not be surprised that Lord Exeter and old Reynardson came to dinner here and would not take beds; we have taken Miss Gage 20 miles to the South and as far to the North upon visits, but I have made it a rule never to go such distances without taking beds. To-morrow we expect the Ancasters and Arundells (from the House upon Lady Arundell's estate, near the late Sir Charles Buck's) and on Saturday the Judges with some young Limbs of the Law; upon the same day the Prestons from Norfolk come and are to halt with us for 2 days, upon a Tour from the East to the Lakes; when they leave us, we mean to follow the Judges and Sheriff to the Assize ball at Lincoln; so you see we try to shew Miss Gage that we are not afraid of her seeing the country, tho the wet weather, we have had may have made some people think that Lincolnshire must be under water. A letter from Preston, as well as from Mrs Reynardson, gives a very good account of the party at Cromer. As you mention your intention to meet Simon at Erthig I direct this to

that place and I hope it will find you Mrs Yorke and your children return'd with all profitable advantage from the Sea, and that you will have a happy meeting with the Eton Boy; pray tell him and his fraternity that their Uncle Aunt and Cousins of Belton desire to be most affectionately remember'd to them; upon drinking Ethel's health to-day we have reminded ourselves that his 13th Birthday is not far off, and when the 27th comes we shall certainly give it our best wishes to him and all at Erthig.

"The Budget of this year, which your letter so feelingly mentions is in truth a very *woeful* one, the weight of Taxes tho necessary, one can't help feeling and complaining of, if Windows be the substitute for the Tea you and I shall feel it sharply for our great houses, but if it would check Tea drinking in our Families and Smugling, we shou'd have little reason to complain.

"The late Weather has suited this place and its environs extremely in so much that we have fine crops of both Hay and Corn; I have been very lucky with part of my Hay, and if the Rain, we have had since the change of the Moon, does not continue, I shall get the remainder in good order which will be very essential to me, for the severity of the Winter has carried off all my old stock of Hay; my Deer consum'd an immense deal, and withal I had so heavy a Loss amongst my old Deer that I am obliged to seem forgetful of all my Friends this Summer in the Article of Vinson, I am sure however that you will be so good as to take the Will for the Deed and will believe that it is a real concern to me to omit any instance of shewing my remembrance of you. Lady Brownlow joins me in kindest compliments to yourself and Mrs York.

"I am Dear Philip

"Your most faithful and affectionate

"Brownlowe."

From PHILIP YORKE'S *eldest daughter*

"Portman Square,
"*November 2nd*, 1784.

"MY DEAR PAPA,

"I beg leave to thank you for your kind letter which I received last Monday seven-night, and should have written before; but as we are to go to my Uncle's next Sunday, I waited for the opportunity of getting a Frank. I am very happy to inform you that our holidays commence the 14th. of next month, when I hope to find you and all the Family in good health. Mrs. Fendall was so kind as to ask us all to Dinner, and we went there last Sunday, where we spent a very pleasant day. By a letter I received from Miss Ratcliffe a few days since, I was very sorry to hear that my Grand-mama was indifferent, but I hope the Bath Waters will have good effect, and when she comes to London in the Spring, her health will be quite re-established.

"My Cousins and Sister join me in Duty to you and my Mama, and love to my Brothers and Sisters, and believe me ever your most dutiful and affectionate Daughter,

"ETHELDRED YORKE."

SIMON YORKE *to his Stepmother*

"Eton,
"*November* 9, 1784.

"DEAR MAMA,

"I am very sorry that I have so long left writing to you. I now take the opportunity of doing it. I received my Papa's letter last week by which I hear he is well. I should be glad of some money as it is all gone and I had rather have some than to run into debt for that takes more of it away after the holydays. I heard

from Sunninghill that my Grand mama is very poorly and has not been able to see me since the holydays. I expect to find Di very much improved by Xmas and also Pierce. Tell my Papa that my boots are gone so little that I shall want another pair at the Holydays and will take care to have them to fit me and not have them as my others were last year. Dr. Sumner sends his compliments to my Papa. Pray give my love to my Brothers and sisters. I shall be glad to meet at Xmas.

"I am, Dear Mama,

"Your affectionate son,

"SIMON YORKE."

SIMON YORKE *to his father*

"*November 23rd*, 1784.

"DEAR PAPA,

"I write to let you know that we break up on the 8th. of next month, and that you may take the Post Coach for the 13th. I am afraid we cannot avoid the dark nights which are very dangerous over those heaths, as I am afraid there will be no moon about that time. Dr. Sumner would wish that Brownlowe should be perfect in his grammar that he may be placed in the second Form where he will be very forward for his age. I am much obliged to you for the half-guinea as I was in want of it. My Uncle Brownlowe was so kind as to send me since a guinea on my arrival into the Upper School, where I find the business easy, and much more so by doing my own. I will attend carefully to my Fencing, as it is a thing which you wished me particularly to do. Miss Harris sends her love to you, and my Mama. Please give my Duty to my Mama and love to my Brothers and Sisters, and I am, dear Papa,

"Your affectionate Son,

"SIMON YORKE."

"It is amusing," writes a great grandson of Frances Lady Brownlow, "how the old lady took it for granted that each of her younger sons should have a seat in the House." The writers of the following letters were her brothers-in-law, but they also, as did all the members of families of rank and position, felt it to be a grievance when the family borough was wrested from them. The system had its bad, as well as its good side; small country places sent up more than one representative, growing cities had no voice in national affairs. But these men were at least well educated in the widest sense, they were independent minded, they had professions or estates, and often, as did Philip, made considerable sacrifice to remain in Town. They were not at any rate petty officials hanging on to a pittance that would enable them to lead a life of idleness, of talk, without work. Take for example some of the many members of Parliament who have found their place in these pages; some of them, like the three Welsh Speakers, were distinguished for their learning; others, like Lord Hardwicke, his son Charles, and Sir John Cust, were of blameless integrity as well. Philip and Simon Yorke, Peregrine Cust and Francis, were at least sound, sensible, patriotic English gentlemen, incapable of meanness or corruption. Francis, like every cultivated gentleman of his day, (especially if brought up under Henry's "holy shade,") made free use of Latin quotations in writing and in speech. He had been educated at Eton and at King's College, Cambridge, was a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn, and held many important legal appointments, culminating in those of Counsel to the Admiralty and to the University of Cambridge. He

sat in Parliament as Member for Grantham and Helston, both Cust Boroughs. "Thurlotumbo of law" refers to the famous Lord Chancellor Thurlow, who, retaining office under the Rockingham government, opposed all its measures: "he was vulgar, arrogant, profane, and immoral" but, as said his opponent Fox, "No man could be so wise as Thurlow looked." Being compelled to retire by Fox and North he was reinstated by Pitt—"the boy in office."

Peregrine, younger brother of Francis, had not the same educational and social advantages, but was apprenticed as a boy to "Chub Chase," a wholesale linen draper in Cornhill, his mother advancing from his fortune five hundred pounds for the premium. The investment proved a good one, for at twenty-one years of age he became a partner in the firm, and was not only the best off of the family in worldly goods, but from his business training, the one on whom all the other members of the family came to rely. He sat in Parliament for Bishops Castle, Shoreham, Grantham, and Ilchester; but was a martyr to gout, "the sins, not of Sir John" to quote from a later letter, "but of his forbears being visited upon him." Both Francis and Peregrine died unmarried.

FRANCIS COCKAYNE CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Lincolns Inn,
"*December* 23, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,

"Tho' I always reflect with Pleasure upon the Parliamentary Connection which subsisted between me

and my Colleague, Nephew, and Ally, representing two or three Constituents, yet, since the dissolution of that Connexion, I have been a Fish out of Water, without any enjoyment of a Seat in the H of Commons, and as if my right Hand had forgot its cunning.

"Ex illo fluere, et retro sublapsa referri,
Spes Britonum, fractae vires,—aversa Dei mens.

We are surrounded with Taxes and Commutations, which are not relish'd by the Public, and we are plagued with Revenue Laws which no man living can understand. The Rage for Parliamentary Reform shews that half the Nation are Fools; and as for the County of Denbigh, the Nonsense of the Parson of Wrexham, and the Timidity of the Judges, "Hic homines prorsum ex stultis insanos facit."

"In such Times, what can Cato do? He can neither stoop to a Thurlotumbo of Law, nor bow to a Boy in Office, who was made a Minister against the sense of the Commons, "postquam excessit ex Ephebis."

"Your influence therefore in the Cabinet cannot be less than mine; and, as to the Excise Office, my Interest there, tho' no better than a blank Lottery Ticket, is so eagerly sought by many of my Voters, that they are every week expecting a Prize. I have but one friend here, (of the name of Lucas) and he is almost worried by B. and me. In his absence from Town I strained a Point in your case with Mr Brooksbank, for whom I have no Title to lay myself under any obligation, and yesterday I received the Letter from him which I send enclosed.

"I hope this will find you and Mrs Yorke well, and the Auxiliaries safely arrived thro' bad roads and Weather. Simon tho' in Domo Procerum seems un-acquainted with some extraordinary Circumstances attending a late fatal accident at Eton, and I doubt whether he could explain

my opinion that the Verdict of the Coroner's Inquest was neither warranted by Law nor Fact. It is not worth while to write at large on this Case. I think of being at the amicable Society at Grantham, and shall not fail to beatify Lord B by letting him know how much I think his Nephew improved. Lord B wont desire him to write about the Battles of others, if he acts bravely himself. My best wishes of the Festivity of the Season attend you and Mrs Yorke and with my Respects to her, and complimts. to your Olive-branches and Polish'd Corners,

"I am, dear Sir

"Your affectionate etc.

"FRANCIS COCKAYNE CUST.

"P.S. A Fellowship of Eton is vacant, owing to the Death of Mr Barnard on Monday last."

From PHILIP YORKE *to his Steward*

"Abergeley,

"*July* 20, 1785.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"We hold to our Resolution to be at home the 1st. of August and therefore preparation will be made accordingly. In the meanwhile, as we shall have company so soon as the 3rd Mary Rice should immediately buy in some Chickens, and Ducks to fat, and we beg they may be so managed as to look well. A Friend of your Mistress' last post wrote to her to desire that if Lord Huntingdon should come to Wrexham she would receive him at Erthig.

"If he should be there in our absence and you hear of him order John Jones to send him some fruit and say I was very sorry not to be at home to meet his Lordship.

"I am your friend,

"PHILIP YORKE.

"I hope Nelly is better for her Jaunt since her return."

PEREGRINE CUST *to* PHILIP YORKE

"London,
"*April* 8, 1786.

"DEAR SIR,

"I waited till to-day to write to you, because by some regulation of your friend Todd our Franks would not pass till this day—I have two of your letters answered the one dated the 14th March relating to your friend Mr Lloyd the Partner of Edwards and the other relating to Sam Jones. Mr Edwards has been with me but as I am totally out of Business it is not in my power to be of the least use to him, with respect to Jones, I mean to give him my Presentation to Christs Hospital but I was desirous you should have the credit of it. The New Elections have made a great Bustle everywhere, by the appearance of things the Coalition troops are terribly slaughtered, so that the present Ministry will ride triumphant in the New Parliament. I had nearly lost my Election at Ilchester by an unlucky accident: As I was setting out for the Borough I was seized with the Gout which attacked me so violently that I could not go. the consequence was that there being a strong opposition I was liable to many disadvantages, but General Eccles brought me in at the head of the Poll, if I dont get turned out on a Petition. I have suffered great pain with the Gout and my friends being chiefly out of town I have a melancholy time of it this is the 14th day I am confined to my chair and I dont think I shall get the use of my feet again these 10 Days. Mr and Mrs Reynardson are very good to me by coming as often as they can to see me and they bring with them your Daughter Elizabeth who looks very well—P.S. Fox has only just lost 4 to day on the Poll but he is 29 short of Sir Cecil Wray so that it may be he will lose his Election. Lord John Cavendish it is said is turned out of York City.

"P. CUST."

How strange, how sad, this frail record, the last effort of a dying hand!

To DIANA YORKE

"*June the* 10*th and* 11*th*, 1786.

"MY EVER HON'D, AND WORTHY MADAM,

"When this appiers before you, I shall be no more. My desire is to express my gratitude now in these few hours that's left me. The task is grate, I am just now so bad can say no more but wish the last line I write will be to you my best of friends If I had but words to express what passes in my heart. then you will know how dear as God is my righteous Judge, you and your dear children is to me may he for ever prosper you and them, and Dyffrin Aled. My errenest wish is that you'll except of my Carpit, and order it to be flung on any flore there, as it was my best of Mother's and likewise my Common prayer to be left in your Pue, in Llansannan Church. I leave to Pirce Wynne Yorke two silliver salts and fore Table Spoons, to Diana Yorke a silliver crame jug twelve tea-spoons and a Tea Toungs. I leave, give and bequeath to Lucy Yorke a silliver Soope spoon with my best pray for their prosperity What can I say more than wish all happiness attend Mr Yorke and his young family, and bless him and them for his and there Civility to me as you my dear Mad'm support me in my life time, and was my greatest Comfort in my Illness. The Barnstons will burie me at Farne, as near my dear Mother as can be, Its but a very little way. I desire no more than a man and the Parish hers to bring me there, the Coffin as Cheap as the plase. I find my deleusion draws nigh for I am very ill, but for all this, my best of friends, With the breath as is left me, say I am, my dearest dear Madam, your faithfull and affect:

"CATHERINE OWEN.

"My most affectionate love to my Dear Brother J. Owen I am sorry I have no more to lave him my silliver cup with the Coddington Crest if you Plase to send Cozn William Massie our study friend."

England was a pleasanter place to live in in the eighteenth century, when society was smaller and made up to a great extent of well-bred people. The younger members of a titled family had as assured a position as their more important relations. A delightful intimacy prevailed between the various branches, duly fostered by letters, presents, and visits to each other's homes. Poverty was no bar in a circle where every one's antecedents were perfectly well known, and Mammon had not then trampled his way to the throne he now occupies. When almost every one in society could trace his descent from a long line of ancestors entitled to bear arms, a knowledge of Heraldry was an essential part of a polite education. Philip, moreover, as an antiquary took a special interest in the subject, and his son, even as a schoolboy, shared this pursuit.

"Eton.
"1787.

"Dear Papa,

"I take the first opportunity of letting you know that we arrived here safe, and had a very good journey, but did not find Mr Birch in Town, so that Mr Hobbs took us to have our Teeth clean'd before we went back to school. I hope you had a good ride to Abergelley, and that you found my Mama and all there well.

"The plan of the window you have not sent. I suppose as you talked of filling up the Coat of Mr Strong's Arms before it went. I hope I shall find it up by Xmas, as I think it will be a great ornament to the Church, and

be well approved of by all who see it, for the Arms which Mr Eggleton has painted at Windsor are very well liked, so that I have no doubt but the Window, when finish'd will please you. Pray give my Duty to my Mama, and love to the little ones.

"Brownlowe joins with me in duty, and I am, dear Papa,

"Your affectionate son,
"SIMON YORKE."

IV

There comes a time in the life of every man when correspondence ceases to be a pleasure, when the arrival of the postbag is just one dreary incident of the uneventful day. Philip's correspondence fell off at this time, or was of that variety which is not worth the saving. Exceptions however there are to every rule, and the last of the series are not altogether unworthy of their place.

An eccentric person was Adam Gordon, Philip's Newnham tenant, and how unhappy the lot of his unfortunate son! No happy reminiscences of school days, of boyish friendship, of familiar slang, of long happy hours of strenuous work and play.

What would Philip and his mother have done without faithful Tom Birch, his school friend? And the history of two families would have been entirely changed, had not Philip at the University become intimate with Brownlowe Cust. Simon Lawry, once the schoolboy, then a sober parish priest, had not forgotten Eton days and Eton slang when he wrote to his cousin concerning his aunt's legacy.

It is sad to think, after the pleasant relations that had always existed between Philip and his steward, that the latter should in the end have deceived him. As far as can be understood, from Philip's letter to a new agent, old John Caesar had left a deficit of £185 which the son, instead of paying off, had increased to £632..4..8¾. Apperly says that Caesar went off to Liverpool with £800, and that Philip on hearing this only remarked "Aut Caesar aut nullus;" but Apperly's reminiscences were set down many years later, and a story is apt to grow with age.

"Dyffryn-aled,
"*Jan.* 5, 1787.

"JOHN CAESAR,

"Your own mind and recollections, will suggest sufficient Reasons, wherefore, under the present circumstances, it was impossible for me to continue you any further in my service. I am very sorry to say I can see no marks of innocency and mere mistakes of Figures, and omissions of charge in your accounts, tho' repetitions of this sort would disable you as a Steward; the Fluctuations of many of the years totals could not be so continually varying by errors of that kind only, but must have had their source in a Traffick, very injurious to me and disgraceful to yourself; and I am very sorry to add that since you came to the management of this Estate; [for] near three years since I have had reasons in my own mind to dispute your integrity. You destroyed that letter (though ordered to file and keep all mine) which settled the salary and altered it, when you brought it in charge to your own purposes and emoluments. Perhaps on the whole your salary was not too much but the manner of raising it, had a very bad aspect. I desire you will as soon as possible appoint Mr. Jones to meet

you at Erthig and that you will deliver into his hands all my Keys and Papers, and inform him so far as possible in all unsettled business which comes to him to compleat.

"PHILIP YORKE."

ADAM GORDON *to* PHILIP YORKE

"Newnham,
"*April* 25, 1787.

"DEAR SIR,

"I should apologize for giveing you this trouble, and particularly on such a subject, but that I am assured it will appear a matter of that consequence, as to procure me all the protection in your power and without the necessary intimations of your Authority, I am sensible I shall not be able to effect any redres of the following grievance, The complaint I have to make is about the private approach to my house from the high road, which is so *very bad* owing to the Farmer's constantly using it as not only to be quite impassable without dangers, for any gentlemen's carriage, and of course I am excluded from the visits of my friends (the *public* way being if possible much worse) but it has lately been nearly attended by very serious consequences to my Mother and Wife from the necessity of getting out under positive danger of being overset and being obliged to walk the greatest part of the way under unpleasant circumstances of Weather &ct.

"I am told the former tenant of these premises enjoyed a power of shutting up the main gates leading through the Estate to the turnpikes road. In this I should wish to be reinstated for the comfort of occasionally seeing my friends whom I cannot invite under the hazard of life or limbs.—As your Tenants have alone contributed to the spoiling of this road, I humbly presume it is not unreasonable to expect they should

assist in repairing it. All I mean is that they should be obliged to put some loads of large stones into the deepest routes and pick all the routs in level which will be no hardship at this leisure season, After which I shall attend to it myself and keep it in sufficient repair for the purpose of your Mansion.

"As the chief objects of my living here are Privacy, and Quiet, which are both essential to the task I am engaged in the education of my Son, it is obvious that the last thing I should encounter (independant of my professional dictates) would be any matter of altercation, or the most distant desire to involve you in the like : but of what I have taken the liberty to mention is *truly of moment* and I persuade myself you will think so and if you will support me, I fear not to remove the evil by a far more pleasant way to me, than *inditing the common road* which might be heavy upon them and which I could by no means reconcile to myself without first making this application. I have spared no expense to bring the place out of the state of ruin in which I found it from neglect and hope I shall merit at least the description of a conscientious tenant. There is one thing if practicable with your engagements to my next door Neighbour that would greatly oblige me by contributing both to my amusement and convenience ; and that is to rent the field adjoining my Garden, thro' which there is a road to my Orchard—the walk in which and the *gate* and *steps* leading from my premises therto point out its former relationship and have frequently tempted me to endeavour at procuring it on any terms within the limits of its worth, so as at no rate to interfere with the *intrinsic* interest of the present Possessor. I would gladly relinquish my little field and orchards which are at the other end of the village to him (for occasional secret trespass curtails much of their value to *me*) allowing every other consideration that would be deemed just and

proper. I beg pardon for the length of this and hoping it will find yourself and Mrs. Yorke in good health to whom Lady Gordon begs leave to join me in best compliments.

"I remain, Dear Sir,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"ADAM GORDON."

REV. SIMON LAWRY *to* PHILIP YORKE ESQ.

"2, Prince's Street,

"Cavendish Square,

"*June* 18, 1787.

"DEAR SIR,

"The many instances you have given me of your Friendship and esteem induce me to trouble you with a few lines. The purport of them is to communicate to you my present proceedings. I have lately been under the necessity of taking into my own hands my Living in Bedfordshire, and having a very large Glebe I find it will be necessary to purchase a number of Stock on a certain prospect of turning to very good account the expence of repairing my house etc. (to use our old Eton expression) has almost made me a "brozier." I hope you will excuse the freedom I take in asking your kind assistance and that I shall not forfeit any share of your regard in saying that if you could give me a draft payable at a couple of months for my good Aunt's Legacy it wou'd render me a very great benefit. I shall be in town again in a week's time at No. 2. Prince's Street, Cavendish Square, and I am, with much respect, dear Sir, your affectionate Kins-man,

"SIMON LAWRY."

In April 1787 Betty, (the little) writing from Park Lane, announces the removal to Erthig of the last of the Hutton

treasures. Dorothy, poor Dorothy, who in spite of broken health and broken heart, lived to over seventy years of age, was dead. She had been a loving mother, and Philip an excellent son, and he respected her wishes even when death had closed her eyes. In his useful pocket-book occurs the following entry: "My poor mother left in her poorbox £39..13..6 and by a note in it said she had taken out £10..10..0 which I accordingly restored."

"Betty" Ratcliffe *to* Philip Yorke

"Park Lane,
"*April 26th*, 1787.

"Sir,

"Enclosed is the account of the goods that are packed to go down, at least, that are nearly finished, and I thought you would chuse to know what quantity to expect.

"We have not seen Mr Willock, but have hastened the men as much as possible, they had no Idea so many cases would be wanted, nor upon enquiry did Mr Willock know what you had to be packed. We suppose by the Thermometer being marked, *that* is to go. We have only put up the things that you mentioned to us, namely, Plate, China, Books, Linen and Glass, as you will see by the Catalogue, They make a great load, and there should be people with the Waggon that can be trusted with so many valuable articles, if one Waggon will contain them.

"We hope, Sir, you are arrived by this time in perfect health at Erthig, and have found Mrs Yorke and the little ones so, This moment your Note came from Lord Brownlow. I have taken the liberty to trouble His Lordship for a frank. Master Yorkes went to Eton on Sunday morning, and Master John on Monday to Rugby,

had a Gentleman and Lady in the Coach with him, who assured Thomas they would be of all the use to him that they could, and we paid for his place in town £1.7s. The stand for the Pagoda and Candle-stands will all pack in one case, and the Temple itself in another slight one, if you chuse to have them sent, and the Thermometer can be put up with them. They wait for an answer about them. We have attended punctually to all the packing, and, I hope, observed every thing that you wished to have done. My Aunt put up all the Books and linen to forward matters as much as might be, and yet we could not take our places with certainty till to day with certainty for Monday next. No one has been to look at the house. We hope for the pleasure of finding all things meet your approbation, and that the goods will arrive safe. With my Aunt's and my respectful compliments to Mrs Yorke and yourself,

"I remain, Sir,

"Your sincerely obliged humble servant,

"ELIZABETH RATCLIFFE."

Happy is the village where the squire and rector are friends! Mr. Strong, the excellent incumbent of Marchwiel, had been the friend and playfellow of Philip's elder children, and those he now wrote about were the offspring of the second marriage

"This good man," says his biographer, "considered it to be his duty, not only to walk in the path of virtue, but to allure to brighter worlds and lead the way. His society was much sought after, for he was a fine shot and played a good rubber of whist; no innocent pleasure, no wholesome recreation met with condemnation from this wide-minded priest, yet it was in his dealings with his poor parishioners that his abounding Charity, the practical side of his religion, manifested itself. To

comfort the sorrowing, succour the helpless, snatch from the brink of ruin the penitent and the sinner, this was his daily task and so greatly did his flock appreciate his ministrations that but one dissenter was ever found in his cure. The old two-decked pulpit, as he descended from which he received a refreshing pinch from his clerk's snuff box, is still in its place—an interesting memento of one, who in life and character, was a living sermon of the truths he taught."

"Marchwiel,

"31*st*, 1787.

"Dear Sir,

"I thank you for your letter. It is certainly something to be able to say that you, Mrs Yorke, and the whole Party are well. The Lady too, though she so completely talked you down, is a character worth knowing something of. I almost envy you the 'ha-ha' upon the supposition that one might have been allowed to laugh; which perhaps amid such ecstacies, would have passed unobserved. However, I took the liberty of laughing at your description. They did not quite do the Bishop of St. Asaph justice. What the young people have to live upon comes, there is reason to think, comes entirely from him as an annuity. Whatever he gave beyond would either be spent or go to the creditors; and was Mr Hare in Orders, any preferment that he could get would immediately be sequestrated.

"Your Children at Erthig were well very lately. They have been to see us once, and enjoyed themselves much. I am to thank you for a fine present of strawberries of different sorts.

"Sr. Watkin Williams is come down, nearly recover'd. The Master of the Rolls and Family are likewise at Gredington, where, I hear the Chancellor is to pay him a week's visit in August. Mr Apperley and I mean to pay our visit very soon; the distance requires a long day.

"The Birthday of young Humberstone was celebrated at Gwersyllt with all sorts of magnificence and festivity. The Royal Bowmen and women attended and with due solemnity crown'd Mr Walter as Bard. Inclos'd you have the verses which procur'd him this honour, together with a Song on the occasion.

"Mrs Strong has the rheumatism. I am got very well. We join in best Respects to Mrs Yorke and yourself, not forgetting the young Folks, I am, dear Sir,

"Very sincerely yours,

"SAMUEL STRONG.

"P.S. Be sure to return the Verses."

Miss Lucy, the youngest and by this time the only surviving child of Sir Richard and Lady Cust, assumed the additional surname of Cockayne on inheriting from her brother Francis a small property in Bedfordshire, Hatley Cockayne. Her great nephew Simon had in 1784 been present at a Grantham election and seen Mr. Sutton chaired (he was then an Eton boy). In 1791 he stood for Grantham in place of his father, and beat the same Mr. Sutton by fifteen votes, Sir W. Manners by nearly two hundred. In July 1802 old Miss Cust gives her spirited account, and wrote the Elections results at the head of her letter.

MISS LUCY CUST *to* SIMON YORKE

"GRANTHAM POLL, July 12, 1802.

"Mr. E. Welby 439	Mr. Manners 406
"Mr. Thoroton 444	Mr. Danvers 339

"MY DEAR NEPHEW,

"Notwithstanding you have with Satisfaction taken leave of your Senitorial Situation, I think you still

retain some affection for your *Wayward Child*, this Borough, and will be anxious and curious to know how it has comported itself during the last week of Bustle, and will be glad to see by the State of the Poll who are the Chosen Members. By some manœuvres or delay the Writ was not proclamed until Monday last, and the Poll did not commence till friday.

"Mr Balgay was Councel for the Alderman, Mr. Mills for the Successful Candidates, and Mr. Ploughden for Sir W. Manners. There was a good deal of Jaw-work concerning the Bonds, and an Oath administered some could not Swallow, and *turned Red;* others made no *Scruple.*

"On the Wednesday arrived the Londoners of the united interest in fourteen Carriages, their Candidates, with several Gentlemen on Horse-back, drums, colours, and music, met them on Spittlegate Hill, and enter'd the Town in great State and order. I think it had a *good Stage* effect. I am told it was, realy a very pretty sight.

"The Outners of the Blue party did not come in the same form; both parties paraded the Streets during the week, but without riot, Mr. J. Manners has been very desirous the Peace should be kept. The successful Candidates thought themselves secure on Saturday Evening, but Sir William would not consent the Poll should be closed, they adjourn'd at 8 o'clock to Dinner, and before all this Company had left the room at the Angel, they were saluted by a Voley of stones, which broke the Windows; happily no one received any hurt and the ring-leader was Secured. Sunday passed perfectly quietly; Sir William Manners appeared at Church, and sat with the Aldermen. My Lady, and her 3 Daughters sat with me, they have Slept at Mr Laurence's since friday. Her Ladyship has been very active, has kept Stationary at Mr Garnear's, writing Dispatches,

receiving Freemen, and turning many Coats from *blue* to *red*. Will your Brother Peirce call this Shaby genteel. She don't mind a few hundreds extraordinary to preserve the peace and prosperity of the Town. Don't you think this is being public-Spirited ? She expressed a disappointment you did not come to give your Vote ; the Majority is very inferior to the last Election. The Court met about 8 o'clock this morning, and the Members were Chaired about twelve. I have not Stir'd out to See any Sights, and I am as quiet here as if I had been some miles out of Town. the Chairs were beautifully decorated, and well guarded by Friends, or there was disposition to treat them with Eggs and Stones, happily they received no hurt. I rejoyce dear Mr Henry had so agreable a *ride* at Clithero. Should he be with you, I beg to return him my thanks for his kind letter and excellent Election Paper, he sent by J. Lowden, who arrived on Thursday. I must likewise beg to communicate to Mr Henry part of a letter I had from his father on Sunday, who thought I might know where to address him, and he did not, he wished, in case the Contest continued for the County of Cambridge, that he should go there to give his Vote for Mr Yorke, he understood Mr. Brand particularly opposed him, and was supported by the dissenters. I had written this yesterday morning, but not recolecting the box of the North post, my letter was not in time. I should have directed this had I not heard the Election was fixed on for this day, and expected to be over in two days, that I think Mr Henry could not have been at Cambridge in time.

" I am very glad to hear our friends like their Situation at Kingsgate. Lord Brownlow purposes returning to Town tomorrow, and I hope to See him at Hatley the latter end of next week, for which place I intend setting out on Monday, Our Holywell friends intend being at home on Friday. I had the pleasure of hearing they

were well the other day. I shall be very happy to see Mr Henry at Hatley.

"I was sorry to hear by a kind letter from Mrs Yorke, that many of her family had been invalids. I hope they are all now become convalescent. I beg my sincere regards to all of your house and surroundings.

"Your affectionate Aunt,

"L. C. Cust."

"*To* Simon Yorke, Esq.
"Duffryn-aled, near Denbigh.

"P.S. Sir William Welby and Family drank Tea with me on Sunday. The Election has made the Bar^t. quite young. It is surprizing how he has born the fatigue. The Treat, I hear is to be on Thursday.

"Blue Sir William sais he will presist in his Contests untill he has brought in a Member for this Place."

There is no contemporary information to throw light on the next two letters, so it therefore can only be inferred that some matrimonial alliance had been proposed for Simon Yorke, and fallen through by the lady being pre-engaged.

"11 *Sept.*, 1795.

"My dear Di,

"I am called away to a Justice meeting to Ruabon, so I have only time to say I had yours and Pierce's letters of the 9th. this morning. As Pierce must now come over so soon on his way to Shrewsbury and I have desired Mrs Price to take a place for him, I think you will excuse me returning just at this time to Abergele and Dyffryn aled. I see not a shadow of harm in what has happened tho' a shadow it hath been.

"My dear,

"Your very affectionate,

"Philip Yorke.

"If you have any of the Star Newspapers left pray bring them here. Remember me always to my daughter and Pierce."

"Erthig,
"*September* 13, 1795, *Sunday*.

"My dear Di,

"I am happy to receive and answer your letters when the Welshwoman is not predominant, I see no reason for vexation: Mr. Simon Yorke has borne a respect to himself, and has spirit to address an agreable Lady, with great Expectations and between ourselves it appears pretty plain, had carried her but for a pre-engagement. I hope she will fare well. The young Gentleman (Hanbury) I hear is handsome and will come of age next January; the lady I conceive is turned 25, but it may, as I hope it will, do very well. I allow a degree of chagrin, and that I could not find this secret in due time; the motion towards an attempt could not be made less notorious than it was, considering we were in the dark so much.

"It is a pleasant part that the eclaircissement took so soon place: for had we accepted the two invitations, and the ground so undermined and hollow under us, some ridicule had attached. But enough of this—I enclose my key of my Cloathes press. I must have my best coat, waistcoat and breeches brought over, and the chief of my linnen. . . ."

The frequent allusion to Diana's devotions and her prayer-book in Mr. Lally's letters show that the lady was always "devote"; but the picture penned of her by "Nimrod" gives the best idea of her in middle life when she had been the long-established mistress of Erthig Hall. "A better woman never lived," says he; "but were an example wanting to show how studiously, how expressly,

it is ordained that our frail nature shall never arrive at perfection, the good nature of the lady bordered on weakness, her humanity was allied to indolence, her piety was tinctured with superstition, the characteristic of the Welsh, and latterly her beautiful mind was all but obscured with a cloud that not only dimmed its beauty but well nigh rendered it but the shade of what it was."

Unlike her predecessor, Mrs. Yorke affected extreme plainness of attire; and once, when going to buy clothes at Wrexham fair, there occurred the following dialogue. "Why your Master mun be a rich man" said the Yorkshire Clothier. "Where does he live." "My Master," said Mrs. Yorke, "lives at Erthig and I am his wife." When the ladies had withdrawn from dinner of a winter afternoon, Mr. Yorke and his cronies were wont to draw round the ample fire to enjoy at their ease his "Harleian Miscellany" (the excellent port which had been laid down in Alderman Harley's cellars); but sometimes Mrs. Yorke, engaged in conversation, did not make the move soon enough for his taste. "A long parliament," he would remark; and if this hint were not taken, "Di is waiting for a prophecy to be fulfilled"; and when at last she did go, "Well, Di, you certainly have much sense, but I am sorry to say more of nonsense."

Philip Yorke, third Earl of Hardwicke, eldest son of Charles Yorke and educated at Queens' College Cambridge, was M.P. for Cambridgeshire until he succeeded his uncle, the second earl, in the House of Peers. He became High Steward of Cambridge University at the death of Pitt, and was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under two Administrations. Here he did much to

allay internal troubles, and became a convert to Catholic Emancipation. Lord Hardwicke was also a fellow of the Royal Society, of the Royal Society of Antiquaries and Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire.

LORD HARDWICKE *to his kinsman* PHILIP YORKE

"Phœnix Park,
"*Jan.* 1, 1802.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have very often intended to write to you since the receipt of your kind letter from Bath in the Summer, but being desirous of sending you something more than a mere meagre acknowledgement, I have always waited for a moment of leisure, and have ended in not writing at all, because I could not be certain of having time for all that I wished. The arrival of a New Year, on which I most sincerely congratulate Mrs Yorke and yourself, and of which I wish many happy returns to you and your's, reminds me of many of my friends to whom I have not behaved so well as I ought to have done in regard to correspondance, and amongst the foremost, I consider you entitled to my 'amende honorable' for my long silence, more especially as I am very indebted to you for another kind letter from Dyffryn Aled. You are very good to think of sending me your Welsh Portraits, and both Lady Hardwicke and myself consider ourselves much obliged by your kind attention. If it is more trouble to send them to Holyhead than to London, they may be sent to my Brother, Mr C. Yorke's, in Chester Str. who will take charge of them, and possibly, if you know the great Mr Jackson, land-lord of the Inn at Holyhead, he will take charge of them safely packed, till an opportunity offers of sending them by some messenger.

"I was really much concerned for my poor Uncle, Mr John Yorke. He had always been extremely kind to me and to Lady Hardwicke, and always seemed happy and cheerful when he was in our society. He was a perfect gentleman in his manner with a great deal of agreable information, and with abilities that would certainly, if he had chosen it, accompanied by an excellent private character, had raised him to political consequence. His Daughter, Mrs Carew, has lamented his loss deeply, and I understand has suffered in point of health from her affliction. The Bishop of Ely is now the last of a numerous Family of Brothers, and as you observe, you are also of that generation of Yorkes, but with a considerable interval, and with a prospect, I hope, of many years of happiness and health.

"I have hitherto enjoyed my health very well, since I have been in Ireland, but I find that I have little leisure, if I attend, as it is my Duty, to the necessary business of the situation, and Lady Hardwicke has been tolerably well too, since she joined me, but latterly we have been under great anxiety for our youngest Child, a little boy of four years old, who has had a violent attack of a bilious fever. He has now, thank God, got safely through it, and our Physician has taken leave today ; but he is much reduced by it, and requires care and attention. We shall not go to Dublin till the end of this month, as the residence here is much pleasanter in every respect though the distance is only about two miles from the Castle.

"The Peace has given us a quiet Winter in this Country, and I hope soon to hear that the definite Treaty is concluded. The Peace Establishment must, I fear, be larger than it has hitherto been, at least for some time, till Europe becomes more settled. In this Country, a good government is absolutely necessary.

"Lady Hardwicke joins me in kind compliments to

CHINESE ROOM
PORTRAIT OF SIMON AND ETHELDRED YORKE, PASTEL BY CATHERINE READE

Mrs Yorke and I desire to be remembered to Simon and Brownlow, if they are with you, and to Miss Yorkes.

"I remain, my dear Sir,

"Your's most sincerely and affectionately,

"HARDWICKE"

An interesting personality is Lady Cunliffe, "Sir Foster's other half," as she jocosely calls herself, in this undated note with its reference to Mr. Yorke having taken part in a Shakespear play. "Lady Cunliffe," says Nimrod, (in his "Northern Tour") "was both in mind and person, one of the finest specimens of a Scottish lady Scotland ever produced." Another anecdote testifying to her charms is related by him in his description of Mr. Leche, the eccentric owner of Carden Hall (the beautiful Elizabethan home only recently reduced to a smouldering ruin). Mr. Leche had dined "not wisely," and on his seeing Lady Cunliffe in the ball-room, addressed her husband: "Upon my word, Sir Foster, Lady Cunliffe is a very fine woman, I wish you would lend her to me for a fortnight." Sir Foster and his wife conferred a social benefit on the neighbourhood by inaugurating the Archery Club—Bow meetings they were called at that time—and the former, a man of strong character, established a mode of living much at variance with that of his hospitable but spendthrift neighbours. The year 1800 was one of terrible scarcity. The king, George III, by advice of Parliament issued a proclamation restricting the use of wheat flour for bread only, and earnestly exhorting and charging his loving subjects to observe the greatest economy and frugality in the use of all grain. One quartern loaf was to be the weekly allowance of each

person, the use of oats was to be limited, "especially for horses of pleasure." On this Sir Foster, though already unpopular in the neighbourhood, especially with the servants, boldly introduced his "Scarcity table," a narrow board whereon hospitably smoking joints found their place, but no room was left for side dishes. The Scotch are proverbially frugal, and in these domestic regulations Lady Foster without doubt co-operated with her husband. She had the habit at any rate of quoting with complacency the lines found chalked up on the Park Gates by a malcontent with more malice than wit.

A great house : No cheer
A large Park : No deer
Large cellars : No beer
Sir Foster Cunliffe lives here.

"Dear Sir,

"Sir Foster being out, his other (if not his better) half has had the happiness of reading your kind note, written by your own hand. It is almost worth being a little ill to witness the joy which is universal, when those recover who have the attendants which should accompany old age, as honour, love, obedience, 'troops of friends,' but let us beg, my dear Sir, that you will keep to the Tribes, and not act soon again as a Commentator upon Shakespear, and best thanks attend you and Mrs Yorke for your plentiful supply of good things which we must otherwise have done without, and with every good wish of the Season to the whole Family at Erthig,

"I remain,

"Your obliged and sincere,

"Harriet Cunliffe."

Many sided in his activities was Philip the Gainsborough squire. He drilled his Militia, sat in Parliament,

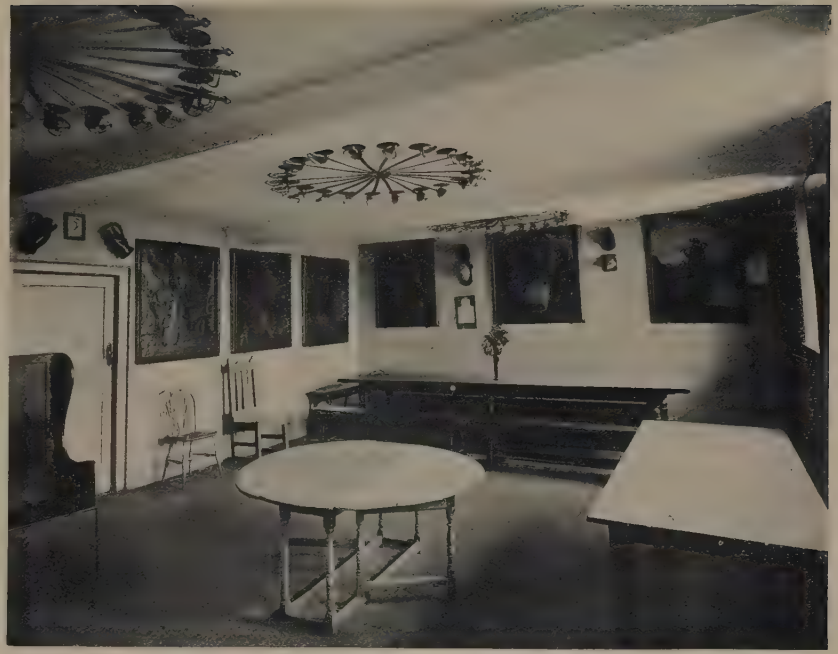
THE SERVANTS' HALL

" where however, from a certain natural diffidence he never opened his lips." He looked well to the ways of his household and shone in society as the most delightful of companions. " His wit " is described as " of the best sort, that species of humour distinguished and admired by Cicero as being of domestic growth." " He was a classic, and had every line of his favourite Virgil at his fingers' ends " ; but it is as a genealogist that his name stands entered in biographical records. His first publication, a genealogical history of Bleddyn ap Cynfyn, was soon followed by a tract entitled " The Third Royal Tribe of North Wales dedicated to Thomas Pennant, and published at the Druid Press Wrexham." These were afterwards incorporated into a handsome illustrated volume, " The Royal Tribes of Wales with portraits by Allen engraved by Bon, (the British Museum Library has the autograph copy of Robert Southey, Keswick, Dec. 22, 1834). He was intending to proceed with fifteen tribes more when death cut short his labours. "The study," wrote one of his critics, " in itself a dull one, was enlivened by a variety of authentic and entertaining anecdotes which had escaped previous historians." He can scarcely be termed a poet, though he published a booklet of rhyming prose, " Crude Ditties,"—of the after-dinner variety. Yet these ditties, those at least which are affixed to the portraits of the old servants in the remarkable picture gallery which is the especial pride of Erthig Hall, find themselves in a setting suitable as it is unique.

In Erthig Hall there are many beautiful chambers : there is the " Chinese room," the " Tapestry room " and

the "State bedroom," with its embroidered satin hangings. There is a great saloon, opening on to the peacock-haunted terrace and the colonnaded dining-room, where the Gainsborough squire and his charming bride hang at either end, over the silver-laden sideboards. All these are delightful, but even more fascinating because so unexpected is "The Servants' Hall." Other old houses have oak-panelled galleries and family portraits by great masters, but this untouched piece of old world domesticity would be hard to match. Low ceilinged, with square barred windows looking away to purple hills, it has an almost monastic simplicity, suggestive rather of Lenten fasts than of the barons of beef and flagons of strong ale which have graced the board. The flagged floor is without a carpet, the heavy oak-table is not disguised by a cloth. Over the mantel hang the axes and blunderbuss used by the mail-coach guard, who was the one link with the Metropolis; over the door, two good examples of the "black jack," or "leather botel." Foxes' masks and brushes adorn the walls, and on the ceiling are trophies of the basket-hilted swords of the militia regiment raised and commanded by the Gainsborough squire. All round the room hang pictures, painted panels toned down by age, portraits of the old servants who once gathered in the Hall when the winter blasts raging down from the hills brought the snow flakes whirling madly, dashing vainly against its solid walls.

Two guineas apiece was the price paid for them. They are not great works of art, but have a very distinct character of their own. That of the Negro, which is of earlier date, is, to be sure, a staring, wooden-headed



SERVANTS' PORTRAITS, 18TH CENTURY—THE SERVANTS' HALL

portrait of the sign-board variety, but the rest of the series have an artistic and decorative quality quite remarkable in the work of an unknown local artist. Gamekeeper, Publican, Carpenter, and Smith, every man in his natural surroundings and wearing his every-day clothes. The Woodman indeed, as in the works of very old masters, appears twice over in the same picture. The rhyming descriptions attached to the portraits add greatly to their interest, but would take undue space; some selections however, cannot possibly come amiss. The Woodman, for instance, who was Lodge-keeper as well, is described as follows:

Though last not least at Master's call
Here stands the Cerberus of our Hall

A soldier in his younger days
He learned that art in various ways

(the art being to draw a cork and drink a toast)

Wheeling himself to right about
He cunningly would catch a trout.

Then there is JACK, (the Gamekeeper was JACK also,) but this was the Jack of all trades and master of none. Deficient in intellect, defective in form, he existed only by the kindly charity of the "big House." In youth he had been a tailor, once he had been enlisted by a recruiting sergeant with more zeal than discretion, and, having in the morning entered the service of the King, received his discharge before night-fall. Jack found at the Squire's fireside a warm corner with frequent meals, and served him faithfully to the best of his small capacity. The reigning sovereign of the kitchen gave him the light

of her countenance and took care of his earnings, doling them out to him in small sums, and the humble scullion has not been forgotten, painter and poet having conspired to keep his memory green. Here is his record :

Reflected here as in a glass,
We recognise Jack Nicholas,
Our other Jack, not he so stout,
Who beats the bushes when we're out.
But him who waited on the cook,
And many a walk to Wrexham took,
Whether the season cold or hot,
A constant porter to the pot,
When in the kitchen corner stuck
He plucked the fowl or drew the duck,
And with the basket on his knees,
Was sheller general to peas.
Few are his cares, delights enough,
That lie within a little snuff,
An idle hour, a cup of beer
And a sure home and harbour here.

In a strong character like that of Philip the peculiarities of disposition noted in childhood were certain to be persistent, and tended to intensify with age. His energy, philosophy, good-humour, were unabated, his social gifts made him " the most entertaining of companions," and the " little sloven " of the preparatory school was known as " the worst dressed man on the country side."

Philip in these pages has appeared under many aspects, as schoolboy, undergraduate, lover, husband, father and squire ; his latest portrait is that drawn by his friend and neighbour, Mr. Apperley (Nimrod) and published in Frazer's Magazine of 1742.

"I now have although difficult, a pleasing task to perform in the attempt to draw the character of the accomplished English private gentleman, not of this school or that, but of all schools; for the gentleman of one age continues to be the gentleman of the next.

"I speak of the Mr Yorke of Erthig of my younger days, our nearest neighbour to Plas Gronow. . . . As an accomplished gentleman and companion I have yet to see his equal. That he was an highly bred gentleman is not saying much, for he was highly born, and received the best education that the institutions of his country afforded. . . .

"Mr Yorke . . . had no great respect for the mountain Welsh, great or small . . . and whenever he saw anyone who had been to spend the week at Caros Hunt the first question he asked was not what sport, but who fought. He would often sit for a quarter of an hour without uttering a word, without indeed seeming conscious of where he was and what he was doing, shaking one leg crossed over the other, when he would at once break forth with some most amusing anecdote. His sneeze! why it resembled the report of a musket, and on one occasion he was sitting in Marchwiel Church, with his back to an old gentleman, who had fallen asleep in the sermon, when one of his tremendous sneezes exploded and the old gentleman, imagining that the tower of the church, which was known to be unstable, was falling about his ears actually tumbled to the ground with affright and died soon after from the effect of the shock!

"There was altogether about Mr Yorke something irresistibly amusing, not only in his conversation, but in his actions, his gestures, in fact his general deportment."

With an income of £7000 per annum which he spent royally, Mr. Yorke, it is said, never had a shilling in his

pocket, and when losing at Whist always appealed to his wife; but Apperley's statement that "it was a doubt with many of his acquaintances and friends if he ever troubled himself to enquire how this income was disbursed" must be taken with serious reservations. Philip, though a royal spender, had a great idea of getting full value for his spending. His letters to his Steward preach economy from one end to another, and his carefully kept account books show the good sense and forethought which regulated his spendings. His generous tips to his son's boy companions, the birthday gifts to his own children, and christening presents to those of his friends, made him deservedly popular with young and old.

His income was large, but so were his expenses. Twelve children, "in the two hatches," to use his own expression; the improvements to his estate, to which, as he justly said, "my successors here may think themselves indebted to me." His hospitality extended not only to his first wife's noble relatives, but to the Welsh cousins of the second. These Welsh cousins, be it understood, some of them at least, belonged to the class of hangers-on who, to use their host's own words, made "visitations" not visits, some indeed extending over 12 months. An anecdote concerning a friend of his who likewise suffered from the abuse of his hospitality was frequently related by Mr. Yorke. All previous hints having proved unavailing, the exasperated host resorted to the following expedient. "What a fine morning for our cousins to go" said the host to the hostess as they sat down to their breakfast on the first morning of the experiment. "What a charming morning for our cousins to go" said

he on the second, but with no better effect. "What a beautiful view our cousins will have of the vale on their road home this morning" said he on the third; and that proved a clincher.

On the stone terrace in front of Erthig house are six small cannon, one of them bearing the words "Liberté et Fraternité." Only once have they been fired, that was in the days of Philip's grandson, and then they broke all the windows of the house. They were cast by a wealthy iron master named Wilkinson, an ultra Radical who secretly supplied the French nation then at war with England. Apart from his political opinions, Mr. Wilkinson was a good neighbour and an agreeable guest, and no persuasion, not even that of Mr. Strong the rector of Marchwiel, his personal friend, could induce Philip to forego the company of "Wicked Will." "What can I do?" he used to say, "I cannot fight the fellow."

In the days when every man was a horseman, Mr. Yorke on horseback was what may be called a figure of fun. His favourite hackney was a cream-coloured mare with a black mane and tail, and her rider in pure absence of mind hung on chiefly by his silver chain spurs. He wore also a cocked hat, and in cold weather an immense military cloak; and when riding the hilly road from Erthig to his wife's estate at Dyffryn Aled used to walk most of the way, for the mare was "too furious" to carry him up-hill, and he was too nervous to ride her down. None of his descendants are sportsmen, and the stable then, as at the present time, while sheltering fine draught horses both for carriage and team, does not

contain a single hunter. Nimrod makes a special mention of his kindness to his servants. To go into service at Erthig was an establishment for life. To Nimrod's picturesque description of the old squire must be added another; that of Mr. Casamajor, Philip's life-long friend. This gentleman, however, although often alluded to, does not appear in the correspondence until the time of Simon the second when he reveals himself as a garrulous and gossipy old gentleman with an amusing epistolatory style.

"Amongst the visitors to Erthig of the other class—members of the fashionable world"—he had just been describing the Welsh cousinhood—"was a Mr Casamajor, an extremely particular old bachelor, only fitted for a London life and to breathe the air of St. James. Some excellent anecdotes were abroad respecting him, touching his visits to his friend, Yorke, many of them tending to shew, not only what a bundle of habits man may become, but that by over-refinement of his nature he may be nearly unfitted for human existence. . . . The family were about to proceed to Wynnstay for dinner and of course to be accompanied by Mr Casamajor . . . when the gentleman in question, highly dressed for the occasion, was found to have remained behind in the house.

"'Where is Mr Casamajor' said Mr. Yorke, 'Does he know we are waiting for him?'

"'He is in the house, Sir' replied the footman. 'He says it is impossible for him to go to Wynnstay today.' The fact was, a strong south wester gale from the Welsh mountains was blowing at the time. 'Cass' as Mr. Yorke called him, would not put on his hat for fear of disarranging his hair. 'It was impossible' said he, 'for me to go into society with all the powder blown out of

my hair by a rude Welsh gale.' Sometimes Mr Casamajor accompanied his friend to Dyffryn-Aled, which is situated in a very mountainous part of Denbighshire, from whence the only drive was to a small town several miles distant.

" ' Cass,' a real townsman, had taken this journey twice and on the third occasion, as they were proceeding slowly up a hill, the body of the coach swinging in time to the tramp of the wheel horse, he heaved a deep sigh and said ' Upon my word, friend Yorke, this is a melancholy recreation. When shall we return to Erthig ? ' "

Notes from Philip's Pocket-book

" Mr Morris, the curate of Wrexham, was to come to my boys at Erthig 27 of May 1783 for the first time thro' the Dean of St. Asaph. I agreed to give him 50 guineas a year for teaching them and he was to attend them four times in the week on the fore noon and two hours each time I sent Mr Morris April 25 1783 25 guineas on account.

" M.M. To put a boy on the Foundation at Eton and the expense there—Apply for a nomination, time of entering the last week in July the growing year not reckoned in the age which is dated not from the birth but from the Baptism Superannuated at 19 according to his age on College book. He must have a dame out of college who provides him with breakfast and washes his linen takes care of him when sick. Lodging meat and drink provided by the Foundation. To carry into the college sheets and bedding, but better to purchase them at Eton from a boy going to College than bring them or buy them new. Two guineas on entrance to the Dame one to the Master with prudent management 20£ per annum will do exclusive of pocket money.

" Sept. 27 1784 I have directed Caesar to agree with

the labourers at Erthig within and without the garden at the following rates being the same I gave at Dyffryn that is to say from Nov 1 to the 1st day of March 10[d] a day and throughout the rest of the year one shilling a day except four weeks in the year by which is meant Harvest when they are to stand at fourteen pence a day.

"June 1, 1774 Thomas Newcome came to my service as Butler I agreed to give him my clothes and 25£ per annum.

"May 24 1776 Agreed with my *coachman* Ambrose Campion who came to my service this day as follows to give him 20£ a year wages a full suit of livery with plush breeches 1 pr Buckskin breeches Waiscoat and Frock Great coat and boots once in every second year and to provide himself out of his said wages with a frock for common work allow him also a jacket when neat.

"*Sept* 26 1784 T. Hughes came this day to my service as groom at the rate of 5 Guineas a year, and I am to give him an [ ] a plain Hat a pair of leather Breeches and a thick set frock and a thick set waiscoat no other breeches than leather a great coat once in two years.

"13th Oct 1784 Richard Roberts came into my service as *Postillion* he is to have fifty five shillings this year and to be allowed five shillings for the boots brought him. In other respects he is to find his own washing shoes and shirts and I am to give him a riding jacket and cap and leather breeches and boots and a thick set coat and waiscoat and a stable coat and a common round hat. N.B. Bob the Postillion had two pr of boots in the year 1782. I shall allow them boots only once in two years unless they are absolutely worn out.

"17 *November* 1785 Edward Allen came into my service as *footman* at the rate of 12 guineas a year.

"Oct 1 1782 put into the Horse pond to clean themselves 7 carp 32 Perch 10 tench."

Philip died March 19, 1804, and was laid to rest where so many of his family had preceded him. He was but sixty-one years of age; and except for attacks from his old enemy the gout, seems to have enjoyed exceptional health and vigour. Many letters of condolence were received by his son, but no accounts of his last illness are extant. Mr. Yorke was a landlord of the old-fashioned type now in rapid process of extinction. When, as he says, in the notice put up on his park gate, he had with great expense laid out the walks and drives in his beautiful wood, he invited the public on the mildest restrictions to share them with him. He enjoyed not the respect only but the affection of a large circle of friends, and an outburst of prose and poetry testified to their esteem.

NOTICE AS TO PERMISSION TO VISIT THE GROUNDS.

Mr Yorke having at a great Expense, and the labour of many years, finished the Grounds and Wood Walks about Erthig, desires to acquaint his Neighbours that they are extremely welcome to walk in the same for their Health and Amusement; All that he requires is that they will enter and return by the Path across the centre of the Meadow over the Wooden Bridge; That they will keep the Gravel'd Paths, and not disturb the grass or Turf; That they will not pull any of the Flowers, nor meddle with the Trees or Shrubs. Mr Yorke is satisfied that all the better sort of People will most readily comply with his wishes in this respect. In regard to any loose and disorderly persons mis-using his indulgence, and wearing irregular Paths and Thoroughfares, or doing other mischief, he has given orders to the Servants who are constantly in the grounds, immediately to turn such persons out, to obtain their names, and to send them written notice to keep out of the Walks for the future, and Mr Yorke has left general directions with his Attorney to prosecute all Persons so offending as Trespassers whenever they attempt at any time again to come within the Grounds.

Philip Yorke Esq: of Erthig, in Denbighshire, whose death has been lately announced in the public papers, was a gentleman of superior endowments and the most benevolent disposition His hospitality, friendliness, and charity made the ample fortune he inherited, a common benefit;

whilst the peculiar mildness and suavity of his manners endeared him to his relatives, and to every one who had the honour of his acquaintance. He loved his Country and the constitution of its governments from a conviction of their excellence, and what he loved he was always ready to support; although constitutional diffidence would not allow him to speak in the House of Commons, where he sat as burgess for Helstone and Grantham for the greatest part of two sessions. But Mr Yorke had a cultivated as well as benevolent mind, being well versed in most branches of polite literature which a retentive and accurate memory enabled him to apply with great advantage. Of late years, he turned his attention a good deal to Welsh history and genealogy, in which, from the specimen given in his "Royal Tribes of Wales" he appears to have attained great progress. This study, rather dry in itself, was, in his hands, enlivened by a variety o authentic and entertaining anecdotes, many of which had escaped preceding historians. He had collected materials for a larger work of the same kind, which, it is hoped, will also see the light hereafter. His taste for natural beauties was very correct, the pleasure-ground of Erthig are a decided proof of it. Of a character so respectable and amiable throughout, one of the most distinguishing traits was his talent for conversation. Few equalled him here. Whatever he advanced arose naturally from the occasion, and was expressed in such a happy manner and choice of words as made him the very life and delight of society.

Such was Philip Yorke; and as long as affection and gratitude retain their influence, so long will his memory be cherished by those who had an opportunity of knowing his worth.

Rev. Samuel Strong *to* Simon Yorke

"My dear Sir,

"I have sent the sketch, which altho' it does not satisfy me, is the best I can do on the spur of the occasion. You may alter it in any way you chuse, but I w'd not wish to have it seen out of the family as mine.

"With our united respects to Mrs Yorke and the family,

"I am, dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

"Samuel Strong.

"*Friday evening. Feb.* 16, 1804.

"P.S. As I feel myself much better, I intend to point my discourse on Sunday to the late melancholy event."

LINES ON THE DEATH OF PHILIP YORKE ESQ: OF ERTHIG.

When rich men die, who living claim'd respect
From riches only, on the scutcheon'd hearse
In awful grandeur waves each sable plume,
And pomp supplies the place of true regret;
But, when the man of worth exchanges life
For bliss eternal, how comfortless th' expanse
He seems to leave behind! Nor Passing-bell
Nor Rites-Funereal our attention claim;
But every thought to one emotion yields,
Sorrow awhile envelopes us around
And un-availing anguish reigns supreme;
Too well, O Erthig, dost thou own this truth
His Wife belov'd, his Children deep in grief,
Lament the kindest Husband, Father, Friend.
Where is the eye that look'd, and looked in vain
To him for succour? Dissolv'd in tears!
How many objects of his fostering hand
That yet we know not? (for to public good
He added private worth). How many hearts
Humbled in dust, his kindness gladden'd,
Now doubly, trebly feel the sacred bond
Of gratitude? Whilst he now gone to where
His deeds have gone before him, drops a tear
(If Angels ever weep) on human weakness.
Father of mercies, whose all-seeing eye
Pervades the heart, from whom alone proceeds
All that is good, enable us to bear
Thy wise decrees without a murmuring thought;
Soften our hearts to thankfulness and love
For every benefit it pleas'd Thy Providence
To give, by him we mourn. Oh may his life
Teach us to live! and may the awful call,
Thou gav'st him to Thy Presence, make us learn
That still more glorious lesson, how to die!

—WILLIAM CHAMBERS.

PHILIP YORKE!

Prodesse, quam praeese, maluit.
Et bonis omnibus, quibus charissimus vixit,
Desideratissimus obiit.

February 19th, 1804.

His various worth this varied life attend!
And learn his virtues, whilst thou mourn'st his end.

His force of Genius burn'ed in early Youth,
With thirst of knowledge, and with love of Truth.
His learning join'd with each endearing art,
Charm'd every ear, and gained on every heart,
Strict on the Right, he fix'd his steadfast Eye,
With temperate Zeal, and wise anxiety,
Nor 'er from virtue's path was turn'd aside
To pluck the flowers of pleasure or of pride.
In letter'd ease retir'd, and honest mirth,
In moral pleasures, and domestic worth.
His was the thought to please mankind, or mend,
The Father's love, yet sparkl'd in the Friend
Calm Conscience then his former life survey'd
And recollected worth endeared the shade,
Till nature call'd him to the general doom
And Virtue's sorrow dygnified his tomb.

N.B. Written on the flyleaf of Sonnini's "Egypt" in Erthig library.

CHAPTER III

SIMON YORKE THE SECOND OF ERTHIG

I. Exit Diana : A gossiping uncle : A budget of news : A sepulchral stele : Robert Wynn Yorke : Army life : Anne Reynardson, "sister Cust" : Lincoln "stuff" ball : Two noble kinsmen : A family friend : Brownlowe Yorke : A good gossip : Lord Brownlow's first marriage : A christening party : Chancellor of the University : The dining-room at Erthig.

II. A gentlewoman of the old school : The Cato Street conspiracy : An unfortunate princess : Mrs. FitzHerbert : A servant of the Queen : Arctic explorers : Portraits of Philip and Elizabeth : An apparition at the time of death : "The Mother of Wales" : John Downman.

III. Simon Yorke the third of Erthig : The chapel and its library : The sleeping palace : Farewell, "sweet Erthigg."

L'ENVOI

I

IN one of Philip's invaluable pocket-books, where accounts, receipts, quotations, notes of all kinds have been jotted down by that indefatigable scribbler, occurs the following entry. "My son Simon Yorke was born about 10 minutes before eleven on Saturday night, the 27th of July, 1771, and was privately baptized the following day by the Rev Mr Folkes." The entry, brief as it is, is more dignified than a similar one, also in a pocket-book, but sixteen years later. "Di Yorke was brought to bed of a son Friday Afternoon at a quarter before four Nov. 16 1787." But whereas Simon was the first, this was Philip, the tenth of the numerous family, and an event so common was no longer regarded with respect.

There is not a great deal to say about Simon; the only portrait of him is as a fair-haired baby boy, with his sister Ethelred. In character he resembled his amiable but not very interesting grandfather more than his energetic versatile sire, but, like the first Simon, he inspired friendship in persons more gifted than himself. Among his correspondents are his uncle, Jacob Reynardson of Holywell, who wrote a good letter retailing trivial gossip in an entertaining manner; Anne Reynardson's letters are good also, tho' of a purely domestic kind. Domestic rather than public news is characteristic of this later correspondence. John Casamajor, now a failing old gentleman, had always something amusing to say, and Tom Birch preserved in age the vigorous colloquial style of his youth. All these writers however belonged to his father's generation, not to his own; the art of letter-writing was fast dying out at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

How silent was the empty house, how lonely the deserted garden, when after the death of her husband, Diana Yorke and her children removed to Dyffryn Aled. She had always been on the best of terms with her stepson, and Simon took a quite fatherly interest in the brothers and sisters of the second marriage. The copy of Philip's portrait made by Allen, to which the postscript refers passed out of the Wynn Yorke family quite recently. It was described in the catalogue as "Portrait of a gentleman reputed Gainsborough," and fetched two hundred and fifty pounds.

Catherine Reade

SIMON AND ETHELRED YORKE

"Dyffryn Aled,
"*September* 14, 1804.

"My dear Simon,

"Thanks for your kind letter and for the trouble I have given you. I think the Supper Tray a very well chosen present, and I dare say that and the Ink-stand for Garthewin are elegant in their way. I am truly sorry we are to enjoy your company at Dyffryn for so short a time. I regret you and Brownlow will be absent from us at Xmas. Do not put yourself to any inconvenience to pay Di's Legacy from your Grandmother, or any of the Interest, Pierce's excepted, when he goes to College. You are very kind in saying I shall have the £100 after your rent day, which will be a real convenience to me, being already out of cash after paying all Bills at Denbigh and Wrexham. I am very sorry you did not know of the £5000 being paid in to your dear Father, I am sure he never meant you should not know that Transaction or any other, and I think Mr Birch must have some recollection of the period.

"I do assure you, I value your affection for my Children more than any pecuniary advantage for them. Pryer's bill for Pierce, Charles and myself has been by mistake paid by Mr Jones, and placed to your account, and likewise a bill for Dorothy. I return you the money. Poole's bill, tho' put in my name, was all for your three sisters, the chief articles for their Winter Pelisses £19..3. I have enclosed in Poole's bill which by the date I am to pay, and two and two-pence for Di, in a bill of Miss Jones the Milliner. Brownlow says you paid Philip's bill to Mr Cunningham in London and I enclose you the £2.10.6 with thanks. I will pay the £8.7.0 to the Taylor house.

"Pierce and Phil are happy to accept your kind invitation to Erthig. I am sincerely sorry poor Lord Brownlow looks worse again. I trust the winter may

not be too trying for him. As your Brothers will give a full account of us, I will only add that I shall always be,

"Your affect. Mother,

"DIANA YORKE.

"P.S. I have a request to make to you, that is that you will give Mr Allen leave to copy your poor Father's picture for me, and another request which is that I may re-pay you Mr J. Roberts of Denbigh's bill for mourning, and in Mactosh's for the Hatchment. I cannot be easy at your paying them and at Xmas I shall be happy to reimburse you an expence which it will gratify me to pay."

THOMAS BIRCH *to* SIMON YORKE

"Bond Street,

"*January 5th*, 1808.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I am glad to hear that you are all well, and sincerely wish you always so. If I remember right Miss Hayman, (or the Grand Piano as you call her, for she was always large,) was a Pleasant Girl as her Answer to one Old Batchelor proves, when she was so sawcy as to call him an Old woman.

"The Porkington Heiress, I conclude means to perform herself, perhaps playing with the men in that way, may produce a fit swain for a husband, but in truth I should not like a wife from such a school.

"The weather is here seasonable, but disagreeable a Friend of mine in a letter lately to me, concludes with kind Remembrances to all, and says the weather is so nasty and cold that I can harbour no wishes about it, but a hearty one that it may soon be at an end. News we have none, but that Moor, Baird and Romana are joined and in high spirits purposing speedily to attack the French.

"My Partners Hobbs and Chambers, who with my wife and all in Newman Street join me in best wishes to

yourself and Mrs Yorke.) had the above intelligence in a letter from a Friend with Moor at Ajaccios. Mr Henry Cust just called here and desires to be remembered. This will come with your Book. Poor Frank's are not to be had and I could not help sending a line with it.

"Yours ever most sincerely

"THOMAS BIRCH.

"P.S. The famous, or rather, the word *in* should be put before Lord Nelson's Favorite, Lady Hamilton, has expended everything I hear, the present Race keep so many servants such large establishments, and trust their wine and everything to them, that whenever anyone is done up, as they call it, I always ask what number of servants did he keep? and what confidence did he place in them? Many a year ago I trusted my wine cellar to my Servant, and the temptation was too much for him, and he got a habit of drinking and after he left me he died of a dropsy. My late brother of Hamstead Hall knowing this and at my suggestion kept a smaller Cellar — which held about 12 dozen or more, the key of which his butler had, but the main cellar he always took care of himself; and when the other was empty went down with his Butler and moved a quantity to the other; he would from habit guess nearly what quantity he should use in a certain time by the Number of People in his house."

JACOB REYNARDSON *to his nephew* SIMON YORKE

"Somerby, Melton Mowbray,

"*October* 6, 1805.

"Your favour, my dear Simon, shot me at Holywell, as aim'd, and I assure you that I felt so much obliged by your pen's having anticipated in execution my long intended renewal of our dormant Correspondence, but I should have immediately have returned my acknow-

ledgements, had it not come to hand at a period when the reduced circle of Holywell chanced to be more than usualy occupied. Believe me, we are not only obliged by your kind wish to see us ' en Masse ' for the purpose of attending the gaieties of Chester Races, etc., but would readily embrace it, (notwithstanding I had rather enjoy myself at Erthig than elsewhere while in that quarter.) Had we found ourselves at home at all this Season, after a full five months' absence, which really has not yet been the case, as the whole rested but two days at home after our return by digression from London, but passed a week at Somerby (from whence I am now writing,) leaving Mrs R with Katherine, who had been disappointed of her Nurse. Upon Mrs R's return for a week only, there was a constant exchange of Daughters to the breaking of the links of our Family Circle ; and keeping up a dis-location of general Family plans at home and abroad, leaving everything unsettled from day to day, under the hope of your Aunt's being released from her anxious situation by Katharine's confinement. We however ventured at a few engagements, and were last week surprised by a visit from Sir Richard, Lady Glynn, Miss, and two Brothers, on their return from the Lakes, and having performed so well without our Head, now feel up to anything, and mean to be very gay when we get home again. Having out-stayed the early moon, we dined and slept with the Pachas on Thursday, conveying thus far, my Daughters towards the Lincoln Staff Ball next day. Sophie Partridge returning with myself ' en Gig-Cart,' previous to our setting-off next day for this place. We expected the Wool-gatherers to have joined us yesterday, but were aware of the possibility of counter-plots, which, if to take place, would detain them till Wednesday next. The next day I shall take them off, whether Kath: takes to her bed, or not.

"We certainly made a very agreable detour from London home, passing some time with Mrs Birch at dear St. Leonard's, for the last time, alas! Thence to Sister Reeve's at Fulmer, where, among other things, we fell in with the Christening of our Great Niece, Partridge; Mrs Henry having lain in, at her Father's in the Parsonage at Fulmer, and our arriving there exactly in Pudding-time; Henry, by the bye, has taken a place in Norfolk, about 30 miles from his own 'Terres,' . . . have possession this Michaelmas. 'En attendant,' he succeeded us 'en famille' at Cromer, where we had passed more than a month with Sister Partridge, and the Doughtys, after leaving our military son and Daughter Birch at [ ] where we sojourned very agreably in quite a new line to ourselves.

"We had the satisfaction of seeing Ethelred; enjoying the Soldier's life surprisingly. Fortunately she is in a very good Circle, with both friends and acquaintance, and very well received by the Cream of the place and environs.

"We had fully intended taking Downham either going to, or returning from Norfolk but Madam not being correct in her calculations as she might have been, hurried my flight homewards sooner than she had intended, thereby giving Brownlowe the go-by again, but of this I have not the least to reproach myself with, having given up the adjustment of the plans to the Ladies from the first quitting Town.

"I may now here lament our disappointment at your failure of appointing a period for our seeing you at Holywell, though we hope that you do not absolutely give up the point, after your Welsh gaieties shall have subsided a little, and your Sister's enter upon Residence in the Isle.

"I think it might do Brownlowe good to change his quarters now and then, and step up occasionally into the

'upper ten' of Lincolnshire, but I fear the 'vis inertiæ' preponderates over his active energies rather too much to make him anxiously look out for a locum tenens, during his absence, the one general excuse for those of the Church somewhat unwilling to leave home, though they are become among the . . . .

"The late accounts of the House of Belton have been more favourable than heretofore, Lord Brownlow has improved in health, most, I believe, from being free from Cough, though I do not know that he gains strength in proportion. Elizabeth I fear, is not as well recover'd by any means, of the very ugly feverish complaint with which she has been tormented some months but that she is liable to returns occasionally, which promised to prevent any of the females from joining the Staff Ball as more than half intended. John had made up his mind to escape from the delight of Yaxley Barracks for the purpose. The said Major was kind enough to pay me a visit for 2 days with his Captain Sheffield. As for the rest of the youths, they have as usual made themselves scarce and kept at a proper distance, so I have seen less of them in Lincolnshire than I did in Town, which is saying a great deal. From others, I learn that the Road is happily turned out of the Park, and no longer any entrance through the sandy gulf of Harrowby. When a proper entrance will be made to the house from the New Road will long, I suppose, remain within the Womb of Time.

"Are not the Welsh grieved by the varied misfortunes which have of late befallen your poor Princess. In all human probability she may feel the last the least, as far as respecting herself only.

"Of late, we have had a brilliant [ ] St. Michael, though my little Partridge and self got a compleat sousing during the last mile on our arrival, Saturday.

" Wyrley and Wife desire to join with our diminished selves in every good wish towards yourself and Sisters.

" Believe me, my dear Simon, ever affectionately,

" JACOB REYNARDSON.

" P.S. Remember me to the Davieses, assuring the Rector of Carlton we should rejoice to see him at our Holy Well at any time, and much more so, if he brings his Sister. Has he been to take possession we hope it was when he was informed of our absence from home."

In pious memory of his father Philip, Simon Yorke caused to be executed the marble tablet which hangs on the north wall of Marchwiel Church. In fair white marble by a sculptor's hand, Cambria, a female figure, draped and crowned, bends mourning over her broken harp. The rhyming epitaph, though artificial in style, is in sentiment sincere, for Philip Yorke deserves the warmest eulogy that can be bestowed upon him.

" *November 12th*, 1805.

" SIR,

" I was on Saturday honored by a visit from Mr Casamajor, and was much gratified to find you approved my work. I have not till very lately heard from Mrs Parry, which made me rather anxious, as I know she would take an early opportunity of seeing my Monument, and giving me her opinion upon it. I regretted extremely I was not able to super-intend its erection, but trust nothing has suffered from my absence. My national Monument, which is now nearly finished, was chiefly the occasion, added to which I have been a Candidate for the vacant Associateship in the Royal Academy, which required my being in London at that time.

" I have, by Mr Casamajor's desire, sent my account,

and beg to say any arrangement you make for the payment will be perfectly satisfactory to, Sir, your obliged and obedient servant,

"RICHARD WESTMACOTT, JUNIOR.

"P.S. The Case containing the carved Marble left Town about 2 days since."

"Mount Street,
"*January 16th*, 1806.

"SIR,

"I beg to acknowledge your obliging favor of the 13th with Draft on Messrs. Birch and Co. for One Hundred, seventy five pounds 16/7, the amount of my account. It is very gratifying to me to find you so much approve my Monument, and that the conduct of my man has given you satisfaction. Any compliment to him is quite un-necessary, as on all journeys my men are allowed liberally for extra expenses. It will be very pleasing to me to avail myself of your polite invitation to Erthig which I have strong hopes of being able to accomplish in the ensuing Summer.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,
"Your obliged and obedient Servt.
"RICHARD WESTMACOTT, JUNR."

EPITAPH TO THE MEMORY OF PHILIP YORKE, ESQ.,
AUTHOR OF THE "ROYAL TRIBES OF WALES."

This marble, Yorke, record's thy honour'd name,
A due return thy many virtues claim.
Yet may thy Life instructively display
More than the Sculptor's art or Poet's lay;
May teach that Probity and Faith sincere,
Will to the world the memory endear.
Soft as the vernal breeze thy temper flow'd
And warm as summer suns thy bosom glow'd.
No discord e'er disturbed thy placid mind,
To every sound of woe thy heart inclin'd,

And kind Benevolence its own reward,
Returned thee back the tribute of regard

Farewell lamented Shade! O now receive
Those pure delights that Providence will give.
Life's duties all perform'd have mark'd thy end,
As Husband, Father, Master, and as Friend.

The next three letters concern Robert Wynn Yorke, half brother to Simon Yorke, for whom through the interest of Lord Hardwicke a commission had been obtained in a cavalry regiment.

No. 2 (*see* page 282):

LORD HARDWICKE *to* SIMON YORKE

"Dublin Castle,
"*February 25th*, 1806.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have great pleasure in acquainting you that I have this day received a letter from the Duke of York, in which he informs me that an opportunity has presented itself for recommending your Brother to a Cornetcy in the 9th Light Dragoon's, from which he can be removed to a Regiment of Heavy Cavalry, if it is wished, on a vacancy occurring. From H.R.Highness's letter I presume his appointment will soon appear in the Gazette, and I will not fail to promote your wishes of removing him to a Regiment of Heavy Cavalry, if you continue to wish it, and from what the Duke of York has said, I flatter myself it may be done soon. In the meantime I think it is at all events better to get into the Army as a Cornet than to wait until a vacancy occurs in the Heavy Cavalry, which may be, disposable without purchase, as your Brother's Rank will be going on.

"I remain, very sincerely and faithfully yours,
"HARDWICKE."

No. 1. "Dublin Castle,

"My dear Sir, "*February 14th*, 1806.

"The quantity of business which has of late pressed upon me beyond its usual proportion, in consequence of my approaching departure must be my apology to you, for the delay of which I am guilty, in acknowledging your letter which I received several weeks ago. I have not however been inattentive to the request contained in it, but have written to the Duke of York, requesting him very particularly to give a Commission to your brother Robert in one of His Majesty's Regiments of Heavy Dragoons. I have asked it as a private favour, my right to trouble him with applications for commissions upon publick grounds being so soon to cease. I thought it better on the whole not to limit my applications to an English Establishment, lest it should narrow his power of complying with my request, and in truth it is of no great consequence, for the Heavy Dragoons are generally in Great Britain, there being seldom more than one Regiment of this description in Ireland; and the D. of York would not have liked this distinction. I shall be extremely happy if my application proves successful; and I should recommend it to you to wait the event a short time before you take any steps with a view to procure your Brother a Cornetcy by purchase.

"I have been in expectation of being relieved from my situation here for nearly four months, but in the first instance the unreasonable delay of Lord Powis, and afterwards the unfortunate Death of Mr Pitt, which has set aside His Lordship's appointment, have detained me in Ireland much longer than I had the least reason to suppose, and than is in any respect either agreable or convenient to me. I am much obliged to you for your kind invitation to Erthig on my way from Holyhead. I should have been very glad to have availed myself of it if it were not necesssary for me, whenever I am relieved,

to get home with as much expedition as possible. But I shall hope, on some future opportunity, to be able to wait upon you.

"I remain, my dear Sir,

"Very sincerely and faithfully your's,

"HARDWICKE."

BROWNLOWE YORKE *to* JOHN CASAMAJOR

"Ipswich,

"MY DEAR FRIEND, "*April* 10, 1806.

"We arrived here on Tuesday, and found Robert so metamorphosed by the gaiety of his uniform as scarcely at first to recognize him.—I dined yesterday with the Mess and had an opportunity of conversing with some of the officers respecting the expence of the Regiment which after the set out, does not appear to be heavy and his income will be fully adequate to support him comfortably in it,—his servant, I am glad to find, is a private in the ranks, and the only expence attending, his keeping him is 2/6 a week and giving him a plain living,—his lodging (Robert's) is found him by the Government in the Barracks and likewise Coals and 2 Candles—about 3 guineas a week will defray his expenses exclusive of his uniforms, —and the pay, viz. 3/9 a day will certainly go a considerable way towards supporting him in the Regiment, and the income of his own fortune in addition ought, I am assured, to make him very comfortable. I saw no unnecessary expence in the dinner, which was good but by no means sumptuous. Port and Sherry, but no Claret, and I am happy to think that the Regiment seems by no means so extravagant as was at first represented. Lord Brownlow has been extremely kind and liberal, but I am glad to find that Mason had as much money to advance, as was thought necessary. for it would have appeared extraordinary if, after the Com-

mission was given he could not find what was necessary to fit him out.—I have preached Robert a long sermon upon the necessity of strict economy, which he promises most strictly to adhere to.—I have likewise particularly requested him to have in all the Bills, and as soon as he receives a remittance from Mason immediately to discharge them, and then if he is prudent his income will certainly be adequate : The place is brimful of soldiers, and one can scarcely get a place to put one's head in and we set out this Evening on our return. I am sorry to say Robert's Charger is extremely ill of the distemper and not thought likely to recover. This is particularly unfortunate and will be a very serious loss. Should it die I have strongly recommended him to sell the other horse, which is merely a horse for pleasure and not necessary, or fit for the Ranks. I wish him to sell it even if the other recovers, but if the charger dies it seems absolutely indispensable. Peirce, Phil and Rob desire to be kindly remembered to you.

" Since writing the above I have had the good fortune to see Col. Birch who thinks with economy Robert may live on his pay he must however have two horses.

"B. Y."

Anne Reynardson, who it may be remembered was the elder sister of the first Mrs. Philip Yorke, had been a most valuable relation to Philip and his children. Curiously enough not one of her letters to him has been preserved, but from the entries in his pocket-book of money paid over to her for the purpose, it is evident that she took a motherly interest in his three girls. She selected their schools, replenished their wardrobes, and arranged for their journey to and fro. It is to her nephew Simon that this letter is addressed.

MRS. REYNARDSON *to her nephew* SIMON YORKE

" *October* 20, 1806.

" MY DEAR MR YORKE,

" Being uncertain whether your sisters are still with you I address this to you instead of Dolly, as I should have done to inform you you have got another little cousin. Katherine added a second son to her family last Wednesday, and herself and child are going on as well as possible. We were very glad to hear of you lately for indeed we did think it a very long time since we happened to have any communication with you or Wales. Pray tell Dolly if with you I am always glad to hear of her and I hope she will sometimes write. I wish you had said you were coming into Lincolnshire. It is a good while since you visited these parts, and I want you to see Holywell. I should like to see Erthig much, and if could move as easily as you could I certainly would before this ; but if we contrive to do what we wish, I hope we may meet next summer. I have an incling that my travelling wheels are sadly clogged ; and the present prospects will not make them run lighter, not but that I think a continuation of War is better than a botched Peace not likely to last and I am glad to have a more favourable account of Robert and I hope he will go on improving. I was dreadfully afraid one time, he could not have gone on, and that capacity would not have allowed it. He is supposed ' careful of his money ' in the Regiment, perhaps by the Officers, rather too much so ; However if it is a fault, it is on the right side. I daresay he finds his money goes very fast. It requires great judgement, more than he possessed, to dispose of it properly ; but I am very glad to hear he is careful. I suppose very soon Philip will be returning to Cambridge. I hope he will duly continue there for it will be a sad thing if he gets the same indolent way, and

dislike of study as his brother Robert, for it is of consequence that he attend as must do for himself. How does Pierce go on. I hope well; and that from being in a retired spot he dont get into low company. Your kind advice on that head may be of use. I hope the sisterhood will go on well together. They have been lucky in getting so comfortable a dwelling. Mrs Yorke is very good to them, and shall be glad to hear of them when they are settled how they like their own establishment. I should be much obliged to you if you would enquire into the number of Giffens' Family, the ages of their children, and what situations they are in and when convenient let me know. My brother I hope is very materially better, but still very thin and I feare very tender and requires great caution, any cold of which he is soon aware is a serious thing as it brings on his cough. Certainly it is a desirable thing for Henry to have Hatley and it must have been an agreable thing for Mr Davies to have made an exchange. Henry is constantly now at Belton—duty will not be very pleasant to Mr Cust but Parliament will soon take him away from that engagement. Shall you have any bustle with the dissolution in these contests talked of. I wish, I trust indeed you will sell well your Welsh property. I think Sir W should give a good price for what is so near him. I am disappointed about the Newnham estate. What is the cause of it? Has Craig been unable to raise the rent there and has he settled to raise them in Wales. I hope he has and that all is going well in both places. Assure yourself, your sister and any brothers with you, of my sincere good wishes and affection. Wyrly and Katherine desire to be kindly remembered to you all. I wish to hear Brownlow intends visiting us and that he feels quite well and in good spirits again now. It was very kind of Mr Casamajor to go to him.

"Will you speak of me kindly to Mrs Jones, Dollie

Davies, the Holywell party including Mrs Kellit, who is now there, would not forget you did they know I was writing. You will direct your letters to me now Stamford, I shall soon return there.

"Your most sincere and affectionate Aunt,
"ANNE REYNARDSON."

(*Extract*) LORD BROWNLOW *to his nephew* SIMON

"Belton House,
"*Tuesday, October* 7, 1806.

"Having now done with Business, I must now give you some intelligence of your Relations here. Your Aunt and two Female and two Male Cousins went to the Stuff Ball at Lincoln, and returned home last Saturday. The Countess of Bucks was the Patroness, and it was a brilliant Ball, there being two Brides at it. Mrs Pelham and Mrs Munday, nee Masingbird, the Stewards followed the example of your Cousin the Major, and treated the Company with prime music from London, which kept the Ball till 6 in the morning. The Major, alas! disappointed his Mother and Co., by his being detained at the Barracks together with all the Officers of his Regiment, to pay due honour to the Prince, who after all, passed not until 8 o'clock in the evening after the Ball, in the midst of Rain, made no stop but while he changed Horses at Stilton. Your Cousin Reynardsons were with Mrs Heneage at the Ball, and are come here this evening on their return by way of Mrs Wyrley Birch's to which place they are going tomorrow to meet their Father and Mother there, who are in attendance upon your Cousin Kath: in daily expectation of her confinement.

"Your Cousin William has had much amusement in the Isle of Wight, and, I trust, has establish's his health.

"We all here join in kindest remembrances to yourself, and all your Brothers and Sisters at present with you.

"Mr Groom desires his Compliments and I remain, my dear Simon,

"Your most affectionate Uncle,

"BROWNLOW.

"P.S. The sudden Translation of your Bishop to, I hope, the truest Bliss, will not deprive his Diocese in general of Happiness, but to his abandoned Son, it must be nearly Perdition. Your Parish of Gressford may, I hope, gain by their Rector being lost to them, in an establish'd Curate of much better Principles."

For the space of three years the solitude of Erthig remained unbroken, save by occasional visitors, and then Simon took to himself a wife, Margaret, daughter of John Holland Esq., of Tarydan. The event is announced here by the congratulations of Lord Hardwicke and Lord Brownlow, Simon's aristocratic kinsmen, with whom he was always on most friendly terms. Four children were the offspring of this marriage, two of whom died in infancy. Among the various Yorke ladies she alone has left no letters, no memories; an indifferent portrait is all of her that remains. On the marriage of her son she left Erthig, took up her abode with her daughter, Mrs. Reynardson, and seemingly took away with her all her personal belongings. Margaret Yorke long survived her husband, dying at seventy years of age in A.D. 1848.

LORD HARDWICKE *to* SIMON YORKE

"Wimpole,

"*February* 15, 1807.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Though I have delayed acknowledging your obliging letter much longer than I ought to have done

from various inter-ruptions of business as well as the unsettled state in which I have lately been between London and the country, yet I trust you will believe that none of your friends can feel a more sincere interest in everything which concerns your welfare and happiness. I was highly gratified by the communication you were so good as to make to me of your intended Marriage and flatter myself you will find it productive of all the happiness and comfort which you have a right to expect from it.

"I shall be very happy, as well as Lady Hardwicke, to be introduced to our new Relative, if you should come to London before we leave it in the Summer; For the meantime I beg you will accept my best congratulations and that you will be assured of my best wishes in this, as upon every other occasion.

"I remain always, my dear Sir,
"With great regard,
"Yours very faithfully and sincerely,
"HARDWICKE."

JOHN CUST (*afterwards 1st Earl Brownlow*)

"MY DEAR COUSIN,

"Having understood from your Friend Casamajor, that your Marriage was to take place on Wednesday, I hasten to offer my Congratulations, and sincere good wishes on the occasion. From my heart, I wish you every happiness that the state of Marriage can afford, and I hope it may not be very long before I shall have an opportunity of paying my personal regards to Mrs Yorke and yourself.

"A call of the House summoned me hither 'invitâ Minervâ' last Monday, but as I sat near a fortnight on the Election Committee about a month ago, I shall not another, and I have therefore got leave of absence for a

fortnight on urgent private business or in plainer terms, for the sake of Fox-hunting. I have directed Vuliamy of Pall Mall to send to Erthig a bronze Inkstand in a new taste, which I thought might not be deemed wholly un-worthy of your Library Table and I hope you will do me the pleasure to accept of it as a small memorial of my esteem and affection.

"Believe me to remain, dear Yorke,

"Your very affectionate Cousin,

"JOHN CUST."

THOMAS BIRCH *to* SIMON YORKE

"Ramsgate,

"*October 19th*, 1806.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I had much pleasure in hearing by a Letter from my good Brother written in tolerable Good Spirits, Poor man! that he had seen you all well at Chester Races. A celebrity that I never attended but have often heard them talked of with Delight by my truly beloved Friends, your deceased Grandmother and Aunt. I have this instant heard from my Nephew Wyrley that his good little Wife presented him with another Boy on the 15th at Night and that they are both as well as possible; I shall rejoice some Time or other to hear exactly the same news from your Worship. I am obliged to you my dear Friend for undertaking to be my Security, believe me I would not have permitted you to be so, was there the most remote possibility of its being any inconvenience to you. I am glad to hear that Robert goes on so well *tam Marte quam Venere et spero quod Mercurius absit.* Your Sisters I conclude will soon resort to Ely and I hope they will find Brownlow quite well. My friend Col. Lane as you may have seen by the Papers has been one of the Fortunate Captors of Buenes Ayres, and will I believe touch a good deal of Prize money, which with a

JOHN, 1ST EARL BROWNLOW, AND THE HON. HENRY COCKAYNE CUST
Hoppner. At Belton, Lincolnshire

large Family is a good thing. I fancy the Cover which contains this is nearly the last dying words of the Parliament, so near is it to Dissolution, it has, owing to the Changes and chances of this Political, I fear I may with Truth add wicked world, been at the Beck of many different Leaders. May God send us a better, and in due time soften the Hearts of all Nations that they may dwell together in Unity, Peace and concord. All here unite in kind respects to you and all your family.

" Yours affectionately,

" Thomas Birch.

" Remember me to Thos Davies and his sister, Gen Warrington and family and all friends.

" So you have lost your Poor Surly Bishop, Poor Man ! I think you cannot fail of having a better : Burgess will I hear be the man."

Mr. Casamajor, in spite of a certain self-centredness almost inseparable from the single state, and the occasional querulousness of increasing age, was still a very valuable friend. He made himself most useful at the time of Simon's marriage, being commissioned by the family to choose suitable wedding presents for the important elder brother. The Spode dinner service (Indian Tree pattern and the largest of its kind), chosen by him is still, after the lapse of a century, in constant use at Erthig Hall.

Mr. Casamajor *to* Simon Yorke

" Suffolk Street,

" *April* 17, 1807.

" Dear Sir,

" Not having lately called at Mr Vulliamy's I know not how much he will allow for your old watch ;

or indeed whether he will take it at any price, unless the amount be laid out in something of his own manufacture. What to do with it in its present state of nakedness, I cannot tell, but, to be sure, something he will give, though it only be the worth of the inward case which is gold.

"The Service you will soon receive is not for every day use: you will think it magnificent, and very ample as to quantity. Its price 75 guineas. Brownlowe and Dolly gave me carte-blanche and Pierce desired to bear an equal quantity of the expence. I thought 25 guineas each neither too great or too small a sum for the occasion: and have accordingly agreed for China to that amount, but have promised to pay the money before the goods go out of the Shop. Of this part of the agreement I shall apprize the respective Parties. Dolly and Pierce cannot be tardy, and by this time Brownlow must have collected his money from all quarters. He is at Belton, but has not written from thence to me tho' he promised he would. Mr Cust is in town, but so poor a reason as the want of a Frank should not prevent him; and I really wished to know his opinion of your Uncle's health, which Mr Cust seems to think better. Mr and Mrs Reynardson either are arrived, or will be in Town, soon: Suppose she consult me about an offering on occasion of your Marriage? Shall I say, a common set of Table china for working days? Such a thing you must soon want if such a crash as you say has taken place. The Knives and Forks are in Mason's custody by this time. I ordered them the day I received your letter. Pierce wished me to buy him a sideboard, and to order some forks (silver). I wait Mr D. Mason's arrival to execute this commission. Mr Groom has intirely satisfied me as to the expedience of keeping the house at Grosvenor Gate. I am exceedingly fond of that gentleman and press him to try your luck at [ ].

"Sir Robert Salisbury told me he could not sell his

Hertfordshire Estate, though placed in the best and pleasantest part of the country, either all together or in parcels. Lord Bulkeley has been dying of a pleurisy, but is, I hope, out of danger. Miss Ormsby looked well and handsome at Lady Campbells the other night. Today I dine at Jodrells.

" It has snowed this morning and is cold and dull for the time of year. Much joy on the birth of little Coedcoch. I yesterday dined at Mr Bamfords with Sr. John Williams. . . . is returned to his Cure. What came he here to do ?

" Sick of politics, I say nothing on the subject. You are not likely to involve yourself in further difficulties with the Wynnstay Family in the business of the address, are you ?

" Having nothing more to say, I willingly release you, desiring my best compliments to Mrs Yorke, Miss Diana and Mr Pierce if he is with you.

" Miss Anson married just at the time you did, Adieu."

Brownlowe Yorke, younger brother of Simon, was the Rector of Downham-market in the Isle of Ely, a gift perhaps of the Bishop, his kinsman, James Yorke. Lord Royston, whose untimely death is the subject of his letter, was a man born out of due time, with a passion for mountaineering that would have found a more fitting environment in the present century. Brownlowe himself died young and unmarried.

BROWNLOWE YORKE *to his brother* SIMON YORKE

" Suffolk Street,
" 12 *May*, 1808.

" DEAR BROTHER,

" I enclose a paper given me by Mr Groom, as it will more accurately explain the accounts between us

than I could otherwise do. I called yesterday on Messrs Birch and find that the 2000 Exchange, will have been placed to my account, the remainder I wish to be paid into their house in Cash, as I have several bills I wish to discharge before leaving London which will be next Saturday week the 21st inst, as it has become necessary to sink this part of the sum received under this settlement to defray present demands.

" You would be sorry to see in the paper the melancholy death of Lord Royston, who was lost in a storm on the way home from Russia. It is a severe shock to his family, who are in deep affliction for this unexpected loss. He was a young man of very first rate abilities, but I believe of an eccentric disposition. He had suffered much by his anxiety to visit countries that no other traveller had resorted to, and had been to Mt. Caucasus.

" It was reported that he had twice had the plague of which his servants had died. He had lost one eye and was supposed to be in such general ill health in consequence of exposing himself to such unnecessary dangers, that he might probably not have lived long had he reached this country in safety.

" Lady Brownlow yesterday very kindly presented me with a scarf, which she said she had always intended for me and which explains my Lord's disposal of his to Mr Hill and which Henry told Mr Casamajor was wrung from him by the easy solicitation of the old banker. Mrs. J. Williams who I met yesterday evening informed me that you had a very gay race at Chester which was numerously attended.

" Lucy is with Mrs Lawry and will return with me to Ely the end of next week. She unites with me and Mr Emes in kind remembrance to yourself and Mrs Yorke.

" Your affectionately,
" Brownlowe Yorke."

Brownlowe, first Baron Brownlow, full of years and honours, had departed this life, and John, first Earl Brownlow, reigned in his stead. The accusation of parsimony made against the former is hardly a fair one ; he had a large and expensive family, and over-carefulness in spending is a common characteristic of advancing age. His son, at any rate, inheriting the good qualities of his father and grandfather, hastened to set to rights any remissness in this particular, and every one will read with interest the spicy, if somewhat spiteful, letters of "old Cass."

MR. CASAMAJOR *to* SIMON YORKE

"Suffolk Street,
"*August* 16, 1810.

"DEAR SIR,

"Why should I leave to time or another pen a relation of the first acts of the reign of John the first Lord of Belton ? It was only on Wednesday last that they were imparted to me by his Mother with whom I have not had till then a moment's private conference, the number of persons of her family or friends that surrounded her during the whole winter barring all possible access to her ear. It happened luckily that as I returned to dinner the Dowager's coach stood at the door of Wickens, she alone in it, she invited me to visit her there and when we were seated she told me that when the Settlements were agreed finished and brought for inspection, she found the new lady dowered 3000 p^r^ annum 600 pin money. Mr. Groome presented herself with a deed adding 700 to her own jointure that besides her [100] deducted no income tax that he presented Henry with 500£ towards his buildings, made several small presents as a beginning to his other brothers and pro-

mised Peregrine assistance to advance him in his profession. Pray join with me in incencing this young man who has not hastily and like one elated by sudden wealth scattered his ingots for his family to scramble, but waited till a thorough knowledge of his affairs enabled him to judge of his ability to correct his father's parsimony, and has at the same time respected the will of his predecessor in some measure by thus *deliberately* adding to this several bequests that the increasing expenses of the time seemed to make neceassary. I am extraordinarily edified by this conduct and want an opportunity of communicating it to my prudent young friend, but the subject must be delicately touched, and rather by word of mouth than in a letter. He knows enough of me to be sure I cannot flatter, but perhaps I am not of importance sufficient to convey any very grateful feelings to his mind by my praises so they may reach him by his mother who will not neglect to tell him how much she delighted me by informing me of his affectionate and worthy conduct. One thing a little surprises me. Henry took the first opportunity of writing to me when I was in Wales to acquaint me that his brother had paid the full amount of his Mother's jointure, that he had given her a pipe of wine, etc but not one syllable has he said of the above generous additions. How is this? Has the brother imposed silence. No! for his Mother speaks. Of none of them have I seen much in private this year; that from circumstances was not extraordinary, but Henry past one whole morning with me after the marriage was announced. I am puzzled . . ."

"Suffolk Street,
"*April* 9, 1811.

"My dear Sir,

"We; for all your relatives are now in Town, were impatient to hear of your safe return to Erthig,

where they imagined Master Simon would be ready drest to receive you. The lazy Fellow however delayed his arrival, I suppose, liking his warm abode, which indeed is not to be wondered at, this sudden return of Winter considered. He bears the change of air well, I hope, and gives reason to believe he may continue amongst us. You had not said how he is to be brought up. Is it in compliment to Grandfather or to yourself that the child is called Simon. Methinks I am glad you have not fallen in love with Brownlow, this does not allude to your Brother, with whom, in spite of ill-behaviour, I have always lived well, and mean to do so, all the days of my life, but the Family from whom he is called, is not in my mind the sort of persons to imitate. The old Lady must be excepted, for whom I have great respect, and to whom I impute the few civilities I have received since her Son's Marriage. Once I have dined with him, neither this nor the last year has he given himself the trouble of calling here.

" Brownlowe and Pierce dine with him to-morrow and today I dine with *them* at Lady Dowagers.

" You knew I was invited by Sir A. Hume to the Family Supper on occasion of the Wedding. This year that great man has not returned my visit. All this is not in the way of complaint for their society would not suit me, but they should do more if they think fit to distinguish me from the rest of the herd. The Lady herself is well enough as to looks, dresses well, and demeans herself as I like. She is a little affected, but with so many advantages, such amazing prosperity and such expectations, if her head turns everyway for admiration, what wonder? She is surely pardonable. Most likely your Son and I shall be strangers. I am sorry for it, it would give me pleasure to see your Children, but I cannot expect to live till he comes to School, and as to visiting him at his own home, how problematic is such a journey.

You could not avow compliance with Lord Hardwick's request. He has certainly behaved with great kindness to you, but I lamented the necessity you were under of spending a large sum upon the road at this season of the year, and for so short a time.

" When some time ago I called at Mortlock's to enquire why so disproportionate a charge was made for the dishes, a clerk informed me that by a mistake of the person with whom I agreed for a set of dinner china at £70, I had it £30 cheaper than I ought, but that no agreement being made at the last order they charged what they should have done at first. Whether this be the true state of the case I cannot tell. Had Mrs Yorke been safe in bed before your journey to Cambridge, I should have taken it ill if you had returned without making me a visit. What possesses the rest of your Family to throw away their money in Town, passes my comprehension. Pierce dis-likes London. The ladies without a carriage cannot enjoy it, and what seems extraordinary is that they object to a Hackney Coach, so that one cannot conceive more helpless gentlewomen.

" I am persuaded to spend the Easter week at Richmond with Sir William Twysden. If the weather is fine, my time will pass pleasantly. Sir William East has bought a house in Welbeck Street. He has placed Harriet Casamajor, his late Wife's sister (whom I call ' *Odiosa* ') at the head of his Family. His abode in this Town is not agreable to me for it cuts me off from the Claytons in great measure. It cannot be helped, for my reunion with Sir William East is quite impossible while Odiosa reigns. Having filled my Paper, I shall carry it to Holles Street, and desire your Brother to have it posted tomorrow by their new Cousin. Mrs Lawry says your Daughter is delightful, not spoiled by Father nor Mother. (unlike her Cousin Wynne, who screamed and . . . , if one attempted to carress him), in short, a lovely

child. Hearty commendations to Mrs Yorke and her Family.

"Ever your's, dear Simon,
"JOHN CASAMAJOR."

"Suffolk Street,
"*May* 24, 1811.

"MY GOOD FRIEND,

"To be sure as you say I did not answer your kind invitation, it really is so; but upon my word I thought in my last you would find a very particular acknowledgment of your repeated mementos of a promise made when we last parted, that in my seventieth year another visitation might be expected at Erthig, which would certainly be the last for very obvious reasons. After thanking you again you must excuse any further mention of the present year; but as sure my powers of travelling continue next summer you shall have me from the beginning of August till when you will.

"If the 36 persons assembled at the Levee last Monday found no more amusement there than I did the Tuesday before in Grovenor St. upon a like occasion; next time you christen a child invite only the necessary attendants We met at half past 6 continued to gether till half past 10 and then parted having been offered Caudle and biscuits, tea, &ct. but no plumb cake. I was not introduced to Lord and Lady Bridgewater nor to Mr and Mrs. Long. But to make amends Lord Brownlow pressed me extremely to come to Belton telling me [ ] looked on me as an Uncle and a great deal more, working himself up till the tears stood on his eyes so I told him in the month of Sept. when his Mother and sisters returned from Harrogate I would meet them. perhaps I may make an effort to go to Sir M Ridyard in the meantime, who will be at home in August, hence it is possible that in my way I may pop upon you at Holywell or Belton for a day or two. Simonides as well as

Anna Soror will be much more agreeable next than this year The Reynardsons are all in town but your Uncle I have not seen. On Monday I go to Twickenham to Sr. Claude de Crèspigny for a week something against the grain, for every day next week teemed with engagements. In July I think of going to Berkshire to visit the Brothers Cust, who have each a house in St. [Watham's] neighbourhood, the Prince of Wales invites Fathers and Mothers to his Fete leaving out the daughters exemplified in the case of Lord and Lady Arden and Sir Richard and Lady Glyn, Can you tell how the latter Pair came to be invited ? I cannot. Pray let me know when you begin your travels. Louis is at present my guest, he's out of health and thinks native air and good nursing will send him back a new man to Lisbon. Kind compliments to you who . . .

" ever yours " J. C."

Poor old " Cass," the fretful tone of his last letters show how age and infirmity were beginning to tell on the old " man about town." He had relations, but no one apparently very near to him, and no home except bachelor chambers in Suffolk St. His release, which took place about three years later than his last letter, is announced to Simon by the lawyer who was also their personal friend.

WILLIAM GROOM *to* SIMON YORKE

Extract

" Lincolns inn fields,

" *Jan.* 1, 1814.

[*Multos et felicis*]

" SIR,

" I have the painful task of informing you that Mr John Casamajor, after dining yesterday with Lady

Clayton, came home about ten o'clock, and sent for his Apothecary to give him an Emetic as he did not feel very well; the Emetic was taken and operated, and a few minutes afterwards he died in his chair without a struggle almost without a Groan. I went to Suffolk Street this morning where I met Mr. and Mrs. Anderson; and we sealed his private drawers, till the arrival of his brothers and nephews who are out of town and dispersed. . . ."

It is a pleasant variety among so many domestic letters to arrive at one dealing with public affairs, and members of Cambridge University may possibly be interested to hear the opinion of Lord Hardwicke on the subject of the contending candidates for the office of Chancellor.

LORD HARDWICKE *to* SIMON YORKE

"St. James Square,
"*March* 16, 1811.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I think you will have the goodness to excuse my troubling you with a few lines to inform you of what is at present going on in Cambridge, in consequence of the death of the Duke of Grafton, who has been so many years Chancellor of the University.

"The Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Rutland have already declared themselves Candidates for that office and I have reason to believe there will be no other. I have never entertained any thought of offering myself, being perfectly satisfied with the honour the University conferred on me during my absence in Ireland, electing me their High Steward on the death of Mr Pitt. The Duke of Gloucester from being the only member of the King's family who has been educated in either University, and having conducted himself very creditably and with great regularity during his residence at College has

certainly very fair pretentions to this high Academical honour.

" The Duke of Rutland in his public letter to the Vice Chancellor has placed his pretentions on grounds which have given offence at Cambridge and are not likely to promote his cause, having stated his belief that the King had given an opinion in his favour, and that he had the support of the Prime Minister. Though these circumstances if true, might have been confidentialy communicated through private friends, they were not fit topics for a publicke Letter to the University ; and I understand that all this His Majesty said about two years ago when the subject was mentioned to him was that the Duke of Rutland's rank and situation certainly entitled him to stand for the Chancellorship and that he could not consider it as disrespectful, though it might be in opposition to his nephew the Duke of Gloucester.

" The Prince Regent has expressed his approbation of the Duke of Gloucester being a candidate and I understand he has every prospect of success having nearly the whole of Trinity and the best half of St Johns.

" If you should have any thought of coming up to the election at Cambridge I hope you will excuse my canvassing for the Duke of Gloucester. The election for Members will come on at the same time as the other for the convenience of Masters of Arts who reside at a distance and if you have not already engaged yourself, I shall esteem it a favour if you will support Mr Smyth who stands upon the interest which brought in Lord Euston and has personally very good claim as a scholar having obtained more than one prize medal at the University.

" I hope you will excuse the liberty I am now taking, at all events I am happy to avail myself of the opportunity it affords me, not only of enquiring after your welfare and that of Mrs Yorke, but of thanking you very kindly

for a very friendly letter I received from you when I was under great affliction. I have indeed suffered in a manner which makes it fortunate for me that I have been able to occupy my mind in publick and private concerns that have employed my time and diverted my attention from objects which Providence undoubtedly commands as not to dwell when separated from them.

"Lady Hardwicke and my daughters have gone into the country for a few days, but return next week. Should you be induced to come up and see Cambridge in a bustle I should be happy if you would take a bed at Wimpole where I shall probably be at that time for a few days, though not with my family.

"I remain, dear Sir, with great regard,

"Yours very faithful and sincerely,

"HARDWICKE."

In the year 1814 a very important alteration was effected in the internal arrangements of Erthig Hall. Before this time, the Dining room had been the long central apartment now called the Saloon. On either side the Saloon were three small chambers, those on the left leading to the Chapel (which last, except on special occasions, was then used more or less as a lumber-room). On the right, the partitions were now taken down, and, from the space thus obtained was created the handsome Dining-room in the late classic style of Sir John Soane. Over the Adam mantel-piece is a fine "Snyders" (his familiar subject of meat, fish, fruit and vegetables in riotous confusion). This picture also has a history; it narrowly escaped falling into the Dee on its way back from Chester, for the train it should have travelled by broke down the bridge. At either end of the spacious

apartment Squire Philip and his charming bride welcome the guests. His father Simon (by Wright), Philip, the Lord Chancellor and Sir Edward Cust join in honourable assembly. Mr. Meller, " the Speaker and the Speaker's son " are also of the company.

Allusion has already been made in these pages to the beautiful mahogany table, the Queen Anne and Georgian silver, besides that of more recent date; but some quaint relics, of interest chiefly to the antiquary, remain to be described. There are the weights and measures for which John Meller paid the bill, and besides, the handsome measure with the lengthy inscription, is another of the same size, worn and shabby, bearing the date 1663. This, used for many years as a receptacle for rubbish in the carpenter's shop, was rescued from obscurity by the present squire.

II

An interesting personage is Frances, second wife of Brownlowe Cust, (raised to the Peerage as Baron Brownlow in consideration of his father's services.) Some half dozen letters addressed by this lady to her mother, Lady Bankes, are already included in an earlier part of this volume.

There are several portraits of her at Belton, one as a little girl, when she wrote French letters under the superintendence of her governess Mrs. Pollen, then in 1775 as a bride, when heads were worn high. There is a charming full length picture of her with her little son, and another, in her old age, with her great grandson.

THE DINING-ROOM. PORTRAITS OF JOHN MELLER AND ELIZABETH, WIFE OF PHILIP YORKE, 1770

Those who knew her in her latter days, speak of her as a small woman, but of great vigour in mind and body.

She had twelve children: five of her six daughters remained unmarried; Anne, whose husband was Sir William Middleton of Shrubland, had no children. Five of her six sons took to themselves wives, and the eldest John (1st Earl Brownlow) and Peregrine, Colonel Cust, had six between them, so the old lady had a fair choice of daughters-in-law and a good word for each one of them.

After her husband's death she resided in Hill Street, but spent a great deal of time at various English health resorts for the sake of her daughters, who certainly did not inherit her splendid constitution.

She was much attached to her nephew, Simon Yorke, with whom she corresponded for over twenty years, letters immensely appreciated by his grandson, but actually from their contents of more interest for the Cust family, which they chiefly concern.

Newspapers were fairly common by 1815 when the first of these letters was written, and, though the battle of Waterloo was a then quite recent event, it contains no item of public news.

Simon, as a schoolboy, had frequently enjoyed the hospitality of Belton, but it was after a visit paid to Erthig in the autumn of this year that the regular correspondence begins. An early letter (from which the date is missing) tells of a terrible catastrophe, the burning down of Belvoir Castle, the seat of the Duke of Rutland "all the pictures in the great Salloon fell a sacrifice to the Flames among which the Nativity of Sir Joshua

Reynolds is particularly regretted, and tho' those in the gallery were saved it is feared they will be found injured by unnecessary removal; the old part of the Castle is entirely consumed but so little of the new is burnt that had it not been for the hasty and injudicious manner of the removing the Furniture, tearing down the wainscot and even the chimney pieces, sufficient accommodation would have remained for the family but the whole now exhibits a scene of desolation. The Duke bears it with becoming fortitude but in a letter my son has just received from him he says 'Reflection but increases the sorrow of the Duchess.'"

In January 1820 died old King George III, for sixty years Sovereign of Great Britain. His death made but little alteration in the government which had been carried on for many years under the nominal sway of the Prince Regent, by his father's death George IV. The discontent, however, of certain unquiet spirits led to the formation of a plot by which it was intended to sweep off at one blow all the more important members of the Government and of the Royal family. But it was discovered and frustrated in time.

Extracts from LADY BROWNLOW'S *letters*

"*Feb.* 5, 1820.

"The poor Duke of Kent's death seems almost obliterated from our minds by the succeeding Events in the Royal family. The Loyalty and veneration, which during the whole course of my life I have felt for our good King George the Third, makes me lament his loss, although considering he was deprived of Eyesight and of Reason his death may be reckoned a release to himself,

PATEN, CENTRE MEDIEVAL SILVER WORK. SUBJECT A MARTYRDOM

more especially as he was spared from any bodily or mental suffering by a return of Recollection at the last. Whatever may have been the errors of his Successor it would have been a most awful visitation had his reign been closed in the space of a few days, and I sincerely rejoice at the fair prospect of his recovery with the hope that George IV may emulate Henry V. What is become of his Queen is now the general topic, and much curiosity has been excited with regard to our prayers for her. The clergyman here, went on from the King to the Priests and Deacons, but in a letter I have from Henry he says it is his intention to name only the Royal family generally, which seems least objectionable. He has much melancholy Duty in view, and I expect he will pass the interval of the two ceremonies with me in Hill Street the Dissolution of Parliament will probably take place as soon as the Meeting Bill has been past and the Members must exchange their pursuit after the Foxes for other Game, with far less glee to many."

Feb. 26, 1820.

"The papers must have given you ample details of the covert Plot that was so happily frustrated last Wednesday evening, and I scarcely know whether I can mention any new facts relative to it; I believe, however, it has been mention'd that the Government was apprized of a design to attack Ministers two months ago when assembled at Lady Westmoreland's in Grovenor Square, that situation being peculiarly favourable for the escape of the Conspirators; but upon some disagreement among them it was postponed, till the dinner was fixed to be at Lord Harroby's, who also resides in Grovenor Square. There the entertainment was absolutely prepared, with all its usual forms, that none of the party intended to partake of it, which secret news transpired, consequently the spies of the Radicals could give no intimation to their employers. It is most fortunate that their leader has been

taken and there is good ground for hope that the dreadful Catastrophe is averted, which would have rival'd the occurence in 1750, for it was intended that after having demolished all under Lord Harroby's Roof the party should proceed to set fire to the Oil shops and every other Act of Outrage. One cannot reflect on such horrors without shuddering and I confess my spirits at this moment do not qualify me for an entertaining correspondent."

In the years 1820 and 1821 the one absorbing topic of conversation was the indiscretions of the poor foolish Queen, who had been wandering about Italy in company with an Italian named Bergami, who held office in her household. The honours she bestowed upon him were a source of great indignation to the English aristocracy, and Lady Brownlow was expressing the opinions of her caste when she wrote of him as follows:

"Not a very honourable addition to the fraternity." She then quotes the following lines, on the undue prolonging of Parliament into September of that year:

The business which calls all your Lordships to town
Will knock you all up, if it don't knock you down.
No good can proceed from these Acts of the House,
But to Peers' eldest sons, law-advisers and Grouse.

But to return to Queen Caroline, "England's injured Queen" as the populace called her. Injured she was indeed, from the first insulting remark and the brutal conduct of her husband at their first interview, and by his shameless profligacy throughout their married life. Caroline, however, was sadly wanting both in dignity and discretion, and Lady Brownlow, herself of spotless

reputation, had little sympathy for the erring Princess. In August 1820 she writes "I had the satisfaction of hearing from Sir Abraham Hume, who was an eye witness, that the Queen proceeded to the House (this was for her trial) in the Coach and six, alone followed by some ladies and the Alderman and accompanied by an immense concourse of people. Great precautions had been taken and the Peers reached their destination in safety. I cannot, however, help having many alarms as it seems hardly possible that things will end peaceably." In November the trial was over; and, owing to the eloquent defence of Lord Brougham, the Queen was declared "not Guilty" of the charge of adultery preferred against her. "I need hardly say," continues Lady Brownlow, "how greatly my son rejoices at having begun his liberty, tho' one cannot be satisfied at the termination of the business which so long engaged his attention and upon which I will only add another Impromptu of a political friend

> "*Take counsel from the Sacred lore*
> *Go, wicked Queen, and sin no more!*
> *But if this effort be too great*
> *For God's sake* go, *at any rate.*"

The Coronation of George IV, the most splendid pageant of the kind ever witnessed in the country, took place on July 19, 1821. The ceremony in the Abbey was marred by a painful incident. The Queen, debarred from taking a recognized part in the proceedings, made her way in full dress through the Deanery to a private door. Here the officer on guard, Colonel Turnbull, obeying the strict order of the day, refused her admission.

This was Caroline's last attempt to assert her position, and shortly after this she died.

The Coronation procession with its 485 figures is commemorated on a roll about three-and-a-half inches wide and nine-and-a-half yards long. One of these rolls, with its descriptive letterpress by which each figure can be identified, is one of the treasures of Erthig.

"Hill Street,
"*July* 30, 1821.

"We find it difficult to obtain a Home out of the town which we are anxious for after a long Residence in this Metropolis, which of late has been rendered gay and busy by the Coronation. I was a little faint-hearted about it, but it proved a most gratifying spectacle and I did not suffer from the exertion. All my family, except poor Lucy, were present and highly delighted. I think the Queen must be satisfied that she has made her last attempt, which has only added to the King's present strength and popularity, which I hope will be confirmed in his visit to Ireland. You may possibly have seen in the papers that I had the honour of presenting at a Brilliant Drawing room, Mrs Cooper and Mrs Dymoke, the former as Bride, was in white and silver and the *Championess* in white and gold. The real Champion was highly gratified by the King telling him his son performed admirably, and the mother fully feels in consequence of her present notoriety. I was not before acquainted with them, tho' knew the late champion, who I daresay you also recollect. We had a grand finale of gaiety at the Duke de Gramont's Fête last Friday. It was given at Almacks which was brilliantly illuminated, adorned with a profusion of natural flowers and a magnificent supper at which all the Company, between four and five hundred sat down. Upon entering the

room every lady was presented with a nosegay by gentlemen-in-waiting of the Duke's Suite who led her up to Lady Osselton the Dukes Daughter. Her Majesty the Princess and Duchess of Clarence and Kent were placed at the upper end of the Room. Prince Esterhazy gave a similar entertainment the preceding Evening tho more limited, being at his own residence in Chandos House."

"Brighton,
"*January* 11, 1823.

"I wish I had any news to enliven this but I daresay the strange Reports of H.M.'s intention to marry Eliza Connington have already reached you, and perhaps also that the [ ] is at the same time to take Mrs Cootes this would certainly be the best match of the two but believe they are equally without foundation."

In October 1822, on her first removal to Brighton, Lady Brownlow expresses her desire to avoid the entertainments at the Pavilion, where the King passed a great deal of his time, and "the Vice Queen" held sway. But for a person of Lady Brownlow's position to remain unnoticed even in the "extended state" of Brighton was impossible, and in January she was compelled to obey a Royal Command.

"Brighton,
"*January* 12, 1823.

"His Majesty's commands are, however, not to be declined and I have been twice with Elizabeth and Mary to the Pavilion, of which the papers may have possibly informed you. The last was to a Juvenile Ball, and I was fortunate in having Lady Anna Maria and her two eldest Girls with me during a call of Business to Henry

at Windsor ; as they are not yet skilled in the dance we only took one, but found several younger who were practised performers, and the King seemed to take great delight in gratifying the children, declaring that nothing gave him more pleasure than such a spectacle ; I daresay you will be of his opinion to-morrow evening when your little party will doubtless be highly gratified by the entertainment Mrs Yorke gives them."

These are but a few examples of the agreeable correspondence of this high-spirited, agreeable old lady ; but family affairs are after this time her principal theme.

A graceful piece of generosity was her gift to her nephew of the beautiful Venetian glass chandelier in the Saloon. She had intended, she said, to leave him a remembrance in her will, but preferred to do so in her own life time. Like her predecessor Anne, Lady Cust, she endured many sorrows in the loss of those most dear to her. The last letter of the series is one of condolence to Mrs. Yorke, her nephew Simon having passed away before her.

Edward, afterwards Sir Edward Cust, Bart, the youngest, handsomest, and most distinguished of the six sons of the first Earl Brownlow, was educated at Eton and served with distinction in the Light Dragoon Guards in the Peninsular War. Although recalled to the colours in the memorable year 1815, he never again saw active service, being appointed equerry to Leopold, King of the Belgians, who raised him to the rank of Knight Commander of the Guelphian order of Hanover. He sat in Parliament for Ilchester and Grantham, and was the author of works, both religious and historical. " Kings I have

FRANCES, LADY BROWNLOW WITH HER GREAT GRANDSON

known" was not among their titles; but it might well have been, for he made a tour of the European Courts presenting to the various monarchs copies of his "Warriors" and "Annals of the Wars of the Eighteenth Century." From service in a foreign Court he passed to that of our own; and as Master of the Ceremonies he enjoyed to the end of his life the personal friendship of Queen Victoria; the Duchess of Kent stood godmother to one of his children, and he was created a baronet when age compelled him to resign. He married in 1821, Mary Anne, daughter of Lewis Boode of Amsterdam and Peover Castle, Cheshire, one of the handsomest women of the day. At one time a considerable heiress, the emancipation of the slaves destroyed the value of her West Indian property; but Leasowe Castle, inherited from her mother Margaret Dannet, continued to be their home. It is told that on one occasion that, as the General was conducting some distinguished visitor to his hospitable abode, at the turn in the Birkenhead Road where the central tower first comes to view he paused to point out the castle to his guest—"God bless my soul!" was his exclamation, coupled with perhaps something even more forcible. In the place of the banner emblazoned with the Cust arms, a pair of white ducks floated gaily on the breeze, a practical joke on the part of two schoolboy nephews.

Beautiful he was in his snowy old age, genial, affectionate, generous to his young relations, and unspeakably beautiful as he lay in his coffin in the dreary Jermyn Street lodgings, where he fell asleep.

MAJOR CUST *to* SIMON YORKE.

"London,
"*January* 29, 1821.

"MY DEAR MR YORKE,

"I was on the point of taking up my Pen, to convey the united thanks of Mrs Edward and myself for a most kind and liberal proof of your good wishes, of which my Mother had informed us, when I received your's of the 23rd, and the delay which has since elapsed, (I only now observe to my shame) has been so long I have only to plead that excuse which people in my situation are for once allow'd to claim. I beg Mrs Yorke and yourself will be assured we shall both be much delighted if our Residence in Cheshire affords us the opportunity of the strengthening of our acquaintance with our Cousins at Erthig. I have additionally to thank you for permitting us to adapt to our wants the express article which you have been so kind as to desire my Mother to present to us in proof of your good wishes which we have done by furnishing our Table with 2 pair of very pretty Silver Bottle Stands, which we trust an opportunity may be afforded us of shewing you in their place.

"I am sincerely sorry to hear you have been so tormented with Rheumatic Gout. I am afraid the sins of Sir John Cust have been visited upon you for I think you are the only descendant of his who has as yet been tormented with that fashionable and hereditary Complaint. I am afraid we have little chance of seeing Mrs Yorke and yourself in Town this year, but if you should be tempted, I hope you will find us established in Westminster where I am anxious to get a House for the convenience it affords to a Member of the H. of Com.

"I beg my kindest remembrances to Mrs Yorke in

which I am joined by my Family circle at present in London, and believe me

" My dear Mr Yorke,

" Your very affectionate Cousin,

" EDWARD (CUST)."

Lady Cust, a clever but eccentric woman, took an interest in Natural History rather unusual at that time, and it is entertaining to read of so many distinguished explorers pressed into the service to supply her with sea birds' eggs.

JOHN FRANKLIN *to* LADY CUST

" Whale Fish Islands

" Disco Bay Lat 68–59 N°

" Lon 53–13 W' 12th *July* 1845

" DEAR LADY CUST,

" I have pleasure in sending you a Pair of Eggs of the Lapland snow Bunting and a pair of the Eider Duck which were found on one of these islands. They were given to me by Lieutenant Fairholme of this Ship who procured four of each and supplied me with the half He is sending his to his Fathers publisher Ridgeways and will direct him to forward these for you to your address which I have ommitted to note down or have mislaid so I am obliged to transmit this note through the same channel I beg my kind regards to Col Cust

" believe me to be yours truly

" JOHN FRANKLIN."

JAMES ROSS *to* LADY CUST

" Whitgift Hall, Goole,

" *Jan.* 29, 1852.

" DEAR LADY CUST,

" I am sorry to say I have received an unfavourable reply from Captain MacClintock, He says ' I regret

that none of the eggs mentioned on your list were obtained during our last voyage, some ducks eggs were found but whether King or Eider ducks were uncertain.' I shall still retain your memorandum and endeavour to procure them should the opportunity occur but much fear there are only three of the kind mentioned which are likely to be met with but you may be sure I will do my best to procure any you may ask for.—As Captain MacClintock is to go again this Spring I think there is a better chance of his procuring some of the kinds you want to complete your collection from his now going out in command of one of the ships, his opportunities will be more favourable to his sucess than with this last voyage. I am sorry I have not the egg of the widgeon but will endeavour to procure one when ever I have the opportunity.

"I remain yours very truly
"J. A. Ross."

The writer of the following letter was perhaps a college chum of Mr. Yorke—he does not appear on any other occasion. "The mixed administration" he refers to was that of George Canning. Canning was followed by Lord Goodrich, who failing to form a united Cabinet resigned office: and the Duke of Wellington became the ruling power in the State.

MR. HIND *to* SIMON YORKE

"Monxton,
"*February 4th*, 1828.

"DEAR YORKE,

"You will probably think me all but dead, that I have neglected so long replying to your last letter. I was very un-well about this time last year with a low nervous

SOME ERTHIG CHAIRS

Fever approaching to Typhus, which was checked in time; and have been so much occupied since that I have scarcely been aware of the flight of time. Now I am much at leisure having only to attend to my son, Joshua Simon, who has left Rugby, and is preparing himself under my Tuition for a Demi-ship at Magdalen College, Oxford, on July next. There are few vacancies, and it requires interest with five Electors who are Fellows of the College, each of whom nominates his Friend, and I am in hopes that I shall be able to obtain the nomination of one of the first in turn.

" Lewis Playtens returned to Rugby on Thursday last where he will probably remain a year or two longer. In all matters where votes and Interest are concerned, it is requisite that a man should be on the alert, as for instance in the late Election for Grantham which you mention, wherein it appears that the *Dropsical* case proved fatal, for want of the *Tapping* being applied in time. Although snugly seated in your deep armchair at home, you are not probably dead to the events that are now passing in the great Metropolis, and being a staunch Tory, are rejoiced at the ousting of the Whigs. We have had a strange mixed Administration during the last year, upon the Liberal system, which, if proceeded in, I know not what would have become of us, but as we have got a staunch man for our Premier in the Duke of Wellington, I do hope the Nation will stand a little firmer on its *pins*, which seem'd before to be so *slender* as to have led to the expectation of a dissolution every moment. My humble opinion is that the Duke of Wellington will not submit to remain in a situation in which he will be liable to a great deal of badgering, but will merely hold it till things are more settled, and he can resign it into the hands of a confidential effective person. Lord G. was mortified at the Church Patronage being denied him so that he could give his Tutor, Dr. Ward no thing better

than the Bishopric of Sodor and Man ; The Duke of W. has however secured it. We have a new Bishop in this Diocese, a relation of the *Little Bantam*, Tomlins is not at all to be regretted by us.

" There has scarcely ever been such floods as at the present season, our Friend Pigott must have been washed out of his Villa at Maidenhead. He is building a house about five miles from Basingstoke, which will bring him near to me, and expects to be housed about August. I trust that he has taken care to place himself upon an eminence. A City that stands on an hill cannot be hid.

" When do your Ladies another trip to [Stewarts] Hotel ? No doubt they will be impressing upon your mind that to rub off a little of the Country rust now and then is very advantageous, if I could afford it, I would treat my Family with a run every Spring. How have you been with respect to your *pins* since I saw you ? If you walk as you did with me in Town, you will keep off that enemy, the Gout. I am never so well as when I take regular exercise, although I acknowledge that when I have been pouring over the books all the morning I cannot sum up resolution to do as I ought. I wish that I was in a more active scene. this new invention of moving by Steam will have a wonderful effect upon us, and soon we shall walk by means of Steam. One of [Gurney's] steam carriage's, I hear, burst the other day in Regent's Park.

" I cross'd from Portsmouth to Cowes last summer in a Steam Vessel for the first time, not without trepidation. I shall be sorry if anything of this kind shall be introduced into Agricultural concerns.

" Mrs Hind and my Son unite in kind regards to Mrs Yorke, yourself, and Daughters, with, dear Yorke,

" Your's very sincerely,

" J. H."

ANTIQUE STOOLS AT ERTHIG

For the portrait of Philip Yorke, Gainsborough received the sum of sixty pounds. It cost forty pounds to engrave. Sixty-three pounds was the sum asked by Scriven the engraver for the portrait of Elizabeth by Cotes, a price probably in excess of that paid for the charming original, of which no engraving, however excellent, can give an adequate idea. Simon sent a copy of it to his aunt, Frances Brownlow, who had known and loved Elizabeth in the days when both were young. She hung it in her "Parlour" at Hill Street, and, while thanking him sincerely for so acceptable a gift, adds: "I wish the likeness had done more justice to your mother, but it is scarcely possible to express the sweetness of countenance that she possessed."

EDWARD SCRIVEN *to* SIMON YORKE.

"Clarendon Square,
"*December* 29, 1829.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have only just got the Proofs of the Plate all done from the Printer's, and therefore now have the pleasure of sending the box off. It contains 120 proofs (the other 30 remaining here for delivery as you intend,) and the Copper Plate with the small Painting, which, I hope, will all be received perfectly safe. I examined the Impressions and think the Printer has done them very well, in every respect. I hope also you will approve the manner in which the Arms and Writing have been done. The account for Printing and Paper from the Printer I enclose; and in putting down my own also for the Engraving I take the liberty of enclosing that also, adding the Printers to it.

"Regarding the charge for the Engraving, I have felt

anxious on that matter, this Picture being the Portrait of a Lady, has more work in it for the Engraver than that of a Gentleman would usually have, as to the Dress etc., and it contains in other respects also, much more than the Picture of Mr Yorke.

"The above circumstance however, I noticed before and explained then when I had the pleasure of writing to you before on the occasion, and you kindly expressed yourself thereon. The time which the present Engraving has taken me has exceeded half as much more than the former plate of Mr Yorke took in its performance; that plate was forty guineas: if I name sixty for this of Mrs Yorke's portrait, I hope it will not be considered too much at all according to the computation above named of the labour it has contained. The Coat of Arms and the writing are added as before.

"Several circumstances have recently combined to inconvenience and press upon me in my pecuniary matters, and which would render it a great obligation your kindness in a remittance when it may be convenient, the mention of which at present, I hope your goodness will be pleased to excuse.

"Trusting that you will find all right and arrive safely, pray accept the un-feigned respect of, dear Sir,

"Your very obliged and faithful servant,

"Edw. Scrivens.

Dec. 18, 1829. To S. Yorke, Esq.

	£. s. d.
To Engraving a Portrait of late Mrs Yorke, with a border.	63. 0. 0
To Armorial Bearings 12/- and writing 16/-	1. 8. 0
The Printers Bill for Printing, Paper, etc. as per Bill.	6. 8. 2
Total	70. 16. 2

Sir Joseph Sydney Yorke, son of Charles Yorke, the Chancellor, "may be looked upon as a second founder

AN ERTHIG CHAIR

of the elder branch of the family," and while Wimpole, purchased from the Harleys, Earls of Oxford, by the first Lord Hardwicke, has passed into the possession of strangers, Sydney Lodge on Southampton Water, bought by Joseph Yorke out of prize money awarded him in the French Wars, is still their home. In 1815 Joseph Yorke was created Vice Admiral and K.C.B., and full Admiral some years later.

His son Charles, afterwards fourth Earl of Hardwicke, and the writer of this note, also followed with distinction a naval career.

"*6th April*, 1831.

"DEAR SIR,

"It is with deep concern that I have to acquaint you with the melancholy information of the Death of Sir Joseph Sydney Yorke who was drowned yesterday in Southampton Water, by the upsetting of a Boat in returning from Spithead in a squall of wind, together with two Navy Captains, and the Boatman.

"The Bodies have been found. The intelligence was received this morning early.

"I think it right to lose no time in communicating this to you as so near a Relation of the Family. I have to request that you will be so good as to do the same to Mr Piers Yorke and the rest of your Family.

"Always, dear Sir, your affectionate kinsman,

"C. YORKE."

"On April 5th, 1831, the day Sir Joseph Yorke was drowned," writes his granddaughter Lady Biddulph of Ledbury, "Miss Massingham, the sister of Mrs Charles Yorke, was at one of the Ancient Music Concerts, in the Hanover Square Rooms, and during the per-

formance fainted and was carried out. On coming to herself and being questioned as to the cause she said she had seen before her the dripping form of a man, whose body was covered with a naval cloak, and although she could not see his face, she knew it to be the body of Sir Joseph Yorke. When the news of his death reached his family it was found that the time of the vision coincided with that of the accident."

Extending as it does the whole breadth of the House a notable feature is the Gallery at Erthig Hall. From one window is seen the green garden's formal peace, from the other the ever growing colliery bank, which threatens to dwarf the hills beyond.

A perfect museum of treasures is this narrow oak-lined chamber with its lacquered chests and cabinets, strange old Jacobean chairs and day-bed. Here is the dolls-house fashioned from a Queen Ann cupboard with cabriole legs, and a Chester-chair, which is an invention to promote digestion by mechanical exercise. The ruins of Palmyra, an edifice of cardboard, mother-of-pearl, and powdered glass, inscribed with the name of Betty Ratcliffe, two tables and a pagoda evidently the work of the same fair hands, handsomely mounted in the Empire style. An arched chest of brown leather studded heavily with brass nails once held the trousseau of a bride: and Elizabethan documents mounted and framed are among other objects of interest too numerous to set down here. Then there are pictures painted on board; stiff, decorative, glowing with colour. Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Bertie Lindsey who fell at Edghill, and Lord Arundel, known

by the black patch over his eye. There are Royalties too, Elizabeth, daughter of England's first James, and her unfortunate husband, Frederick King of Bohemia; the wicked Countess of Nottingham, she who betrayed Essex, and deceived the Queen, is usually identified in the Elizabethan lady who holds a ring in her hand. Last, but not least, that local celebrity Catherine of Beren, "mother of Wales." So numerous are her descendants that her portrait is an indispensable addition to nearly every Welsh country house. Catherine had four husbands; and when invited to marry on her return from the funeral of the second gave a diplomatic reply. She had, she said, accepted a third on the outward journey, but she would give him the next turn, and tradition says that the promise was fulfilled.

On the basement of Erthig Hall a small room called "the museum," is the receptacle for various objects, the most interesting being the pewter, glass, and clog pattens found in the house. In the adjoining lower hall, the "Tribes' Room," so called from its heraldic decorations, stands a lovely little sedan-chair with fittings of yellow brocade which might have belonged to the fairy godmother herself. In the lobby which intervenes, are oak, copper, and china; while every inch of wall space on staircases and in passages is covered with framed pictures of every description. The long basement passage passing by the men-servants' quarters becomes, in its latter course, a gallery of servants' portraits, the most interesting being a group taken from a daguerreotype of 1852 which has its exact counterpart in a tinted photograph of 1912, and here in an oak-panelled chamber, perhaps

"the pritty warm parlour" described by Mrs. Lea, the present house-keeper has her snug abode.

In the kitchen, a large high-ceilinged room with three arched windows, the presiding deity is not that ever varying personage the cook, but a huge St. Bernard, bland, amiable, majestic, yet born to be a terror to night-roving burglar, or wandering tramp. In the enclosed space beyond there is a long low building, the constant scene of popular hospitality and children's play; and a cupola raising its haughty head faces across the Italian garden, the clock, with which in olden days it was more closely associated, for clock and cupola, together with the beautiful wrought gates of the Forest lodge (their design, berries and foliage and little twisting flames) came from Stansty, an old house in the neighbourhood, which falling into the grip of Chancery, had long suffered decay.

An English artist who, it might have been expected, would have been found at Erthig, is represented by one example only and that not an original but an engraving. This is John Downman, whom Fortune, capricious in her favours, has elevated of late to a throne among the Immortals. This is the more remarkable, as John Downman was born at Ruabon, lived for some time in Chester, died and was buried at Wrexham. Philip Yorke (the first of Erthig) had a cultivated taste in Art, and the portraits of himself, his wife and their children are among the best of their kind; but this taste was not inherited by his son, who was reigning at Erthig at the time that Downman came to live in Wrexham. The Squires of Erthig were not Art collectors in the strict

THE SERVANTS, ERTHIG HALL, 1862

THE SERVANTS, ERTHIG HALL, 1912

meaning of the term. John Meller bought beautiful furniture and plate because all good furniture and plate was beautiful in his time. Philip added to it by inheritance the Hutton possessions gathered together in the same "Golden Age" of English domestic Art. His successors showed their appreciation by leaving things as they found them, and little save costly wedding and presentation gifts were added during the nineteenth century.

"While living at Chester Downman's only daughter married a solicitor of that City. The wedding took place at Wrexham, where the artist had finally settled down, quite close to his birth place." This was in May 1817. The marriage was an unfortunate one, Richard Mellor Benjamin having led a notoriously evil life, died in a drunken fit in the Beast-Market, shortly before his father-in-law, and his widow was compelled by reduced circumstances to part with (all that remained of) her father's drawings to Sir Robert Cunliffe of Acton.

The memory of the artist lingers in Wrexham in a single anecdote. The old man, naturally of a peaceable disposition, was deliberately goaded to fury by unjust taunts, and challenged his opponent to a duel. When, however, they came together his fit of anger had passed by, and he made so handsome an apology that "the two men shook hands and remained friends till the close of Downman's life." The story was well known in the place, and when the artist died, a number of the "rougher" sort of people followed the funeral procession as an expression of their admiration for a man capable of such high sentiments.

III

SIMON YORKE THE THIRD OF ERTHIG

Simon married Victoria, daughter of Sir Edward Cust; his sister Anne, Charles Reynardson Esq. of Holywell; the young people in both instances being cousins. The Yorkes were not as a rule a long-lived race, but Simon the third spent a blameless and uneventful existence of eighty-three years, during which time he hardly ever left his beautiful home. His daughters married late in life, and had no children, his second son, Victor, fighting in South Africa, found a soldier's grave, Philip his heir was the last of his race, and the Yorkes of Erthig seemed nigh to become extinct.

The shadow of a domestic tragedy had blighted the youth of the present Squire. Only with late middle life have great blessings been vouchsafed to him, for a devoted wife and two delightful sons are the crown and consolation of his declining years. He it was who first collected the papers from which this Chronicle has been compiled, but blindness overtook him by the way. The present author, doubly a relation, and now a privileged inmate of that happy home circle, has picked up the pen where he was forced to lay it down. Grave and gay are the scenes depicted in the pages of the Chronicle, the grave and sad as ever predominating, yet the end is—as it should be in all true romances.

It was in the days of the second Simon that the Chapel at Erthig was first put to its present purpose, but many beautiful additions were made to it during

the married life of his son. It is very dignified and harmonious, and resembles a College Chapel, with its double tier of oaken pews, on which wax tapers, like stars, send their rays through the "dim religious light." The Altar picture is a Madonna and Child (School of Correggio ?). Beneath on the Altar stands a large silver paten which, used at one time for dessert, was withdrawn from secular uses by the present Squire.

Within a handsomely embossed border of the Georgian era, is a fine piece of mediæval metal-work on very high relief (the hands of the figures being detached and screwed on from the back), whose irregular shape is entirely concealed by the ingenious method with which it has been set in the circular frame.

The Show-cases in the Chapel contain an interesting collection of Bibles and Prayer-books of various periods. There is the "Breeches Bible," published in 1607, and a "Charles I Prayer-book," (the one mislaid by Kenrick Eyton ?) "The Vinegar Bible," in two huge volumes, published at Oxford in 1715. A "William and Mary" Prayer-book of 1689 is an interesting example of the temporary revival of "Black Letter." To the chapel itself the latest and most valuable addition is that made by the present Squire,—three stained-glass Windows, (one of the 15th century representing St. Catherine with the wheel) formerly in the church at Wimpole. The inscription beneath the central window runs thus :

"To the Glory of God, and in pious memory of an illustrious kinsman, Philip Earl of Hardwicke and Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, also as a Thank-offering for

the Blessing of two sons, Simon, born June 24th 1903, and Philip, born March 23rd 1905, Baptised in this Chapel. These three windows were here set up by Philip and Louisa Yorke of Erthig."

IV

L'ENVOI

The old house basks sleepily in the last warm rays of Autumn sunshine gleaming fitfully through masses of piled cloud.

Already golden sunflowers in the herbaceous borders have succeeded to sweet peas, sweet peas of every imaginable hue standing in impenetrable hedges many feet high covered with dainty blossoms, each one like an imprisoned butterfly quivering to the faintest breath of the south-west wind.

Yesterday that now gentle wind was soughing mightily in the great beech avenues, drowning the nearer tinkle of the tiny fountains, and the cooing of the doves in their grotto in the Italian garden. The peacock, bereft of his chief ornament, and leaving here and there a feathered eye gleaming like a jewel 'mid tangled clematis, is gardening on his own account! wreaking destruction on the fuchsias and heliotropes that border the terrace steps.

His sober-coloured spouse, the anxious mother of one chick, follows his example while keeping modestly at a distance.

A solitary seagull with mottled plumage stalks gloomily over the velvet turf, his wild soul yearning for the

ERTHIG HALL. EAST FRONT

gregarious company of his noisy fellows on the beetling crags of Puffin's sea-beaten isle.

In the quiet pool, haunt of stately swans, tall blossoms, blue, scarlet, and crimson, are reflected as in a mirror.

So still is it that although no briar hedge shuts out the crowded world

Here rests the sap within the leaf,
Here stays the blood along the veins.
Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,
Faint murmurs from the meadow come.

Suddenly the silence is broken, small flying figures, blue and white, come tearing down the gravel paths, in their wake a noisy wooden train. Many years, nearly half a century, have passed since children's voices waked the echoes of the old house, and brought gladness to the heart of its owners.

Standing alone on a hilltop, to the children these walled gardens shut in a world of peace and pleasure, far remote from the toilsome haunts of men.

Some day they will know that beneath their ancestral acres stretch dark passages and gloomy caves, where by day and night toil never stays, the clang of hammer and the creak of machinery beat on unceasingly. Now their imagination limits itself to the things which make their little world, the dogs great and small, the fluffy pink-eyed rabbits, the stolid guinea-pigs, and " Bully " in his cage in the cosy nursery, where though August days are not yet numbered, a cheerful fire welcomes the coming of bedtime and sleep.

Hand in hand they run through the gloomy shadows of the long gallery, where portraits of dead ancestors look

down from darkly panelled walls, to "Mother's" room where in winter and summer alike roses bloom in crimson splendour on trellised walls, or stand in turns by their father in the coloured light of jewelled windows, when in the chapel the household daily assemble for the morning prayer.

Happy, happy childhood, untouched as yet save by childish ailments and sorrows easily assuaged!

The master of this fair domain sits meditating in the sunshine, his great dog at his feet: a pathetic figure surely, for Time has too soon touched his locks to snowy whiteness and the eye of sense no longer drinks in with gladness the sober glories of his ancestral home.

But if eyes be dim, his natural strength is not abated, and his children find in their father the congenial and constant companion of their happiest hours. In garden and stable, timber-yard and play-ground, he plans, consults, directs the labours of his men, who, like the craftsmen of old, can execute a jewel for a monarch and yet not scorn to cast a common nail. Within doors, his enforced leisure is devoted to the construction of rhyming chronicles, setting forth the lives and virtues of those faithful dependants, whose years of service cover the life-time of the majority.

To the seeker of information, his well-stored memory is a treasure house of antiquarian lore, and when dusk falls, the organ's note stealing sweetly through the shadows tells of a practised hand, lingering fondly on the ivory keys. At the head of his well-furnished table, where polished mahogany reflects back the shimmering lustre of silver vessels, priceless in their beauty and

antiquity, he recalls the traditions of his "House." He is no sportsman, "the condition of his wardrobe" is no great matter of concern to him, but, like his namesake and great grandfather, he practises the widest and most gracious hospitality, embracing in its limits friends and cousins of the remotest degree.

At Erthig Hall in the twentieth, the nineteenth century still reigns supreme. The trampling of iron hoofs awakes the echoes of the wide stable yard, and the voice of the motor horn is not heard in the land. In the long terraced walks and the carpenter's yards, men who have worked on the estate twenty, thirty, and forty years leisurely pursue the even tenor of their way. Within doors a single post, an irregular newspaper, a gracious hostess who finds sufficient occupation in the care of her husband, her children, and her guests. A chime of sweet toned bells and a heavy gong proclaim at stated intervals the order of the day. Prayers, meals, carriage exercise in ordered succession. Time is no object, hurry is unknown. How strange to read of, how much stranger to live in, this household whose interests extend not beyond the garden walls, and who let the world go by.

Note.—This was written in August 1910 before the Chronicle was begun; but except that the children are now schoolboys there is little change.

APPENDIX

Vol. I, p. 263 : "The young Earl of Hardwicke and Charles Yorke wrote between them "The Athenian Letters," a work not inferior in merit to the best of those pseudo-classical productions which unite the dullness of a political memoir to the affectations and inaccuracies of an historical novel, and which leave on the palate a sickly taste that is perhaps the most disagreeable of all literary sensations. It is difficult to imagine how any human being, who could read a translation of Thucydides, should sit down to two volumes of the correspondence of the agent to the King of Persia, supposed to be resident at Athens during the Peloponnesian War."—*Early History of C. J. Fox* (*Trevelyan*), p. 233.

Vol. I, p. 309 : "Paul Whithead by using such power of satire as he possessed against the enemies of men who had something to give, ended by getting eight hundred a year as Deputy Treasurer to the Chamber, whereas the trade value of his collected works might have been something under eight hundred shillings." — *Ibid.*, p. 105.

Vol. I, p. 317 : "He had great virtues," said a foolish clergyman in his funeral sermon on the Prince of Wales. "Indeed they degenerated into vices. He was very generous, but I hear that his generosity has ruined a great many people, and then his condescension was such that he kept very bad company."—*Ibid.*, p. 118.

APPENDIX

Vol. I, p. 318 : The Julian Calendar accepted in England was founded on the erroneous supposition that the year consists of 365 days 6 hours, that being eleven minutes in excess of the mean solar year, and the estimates of the lunation were also inaccurate.

Vol. I, p. 323 : "A public wedding, Oh what a gauntlet for any woman of delicacy to run! Every one spoke against a public wedding as the most shocking thing in the world."—*Social England*—(*Traill*).

Vol. I, p. 356 : "It must have been an edifying lesson in ethics for the Cambridge undergraduates, when the Earl of Sandwich put himself up for the High Stewardship of their University, within six weeks of the time that his initiation into the orgies and blasphemies of Medmenham Abbey, had become matter of comment throughout the length and breadth of England. The post had been vacated by the death of Lord Hardwicke; and, scandalized by the prospect of such a successor to an office which his father had dignified, the deceased nobleman's eldest son announced himself as a rival candidate.

Sandwich, who was the most consummate electioneer of the day, left his character to take care of itself, and applied all his activity and experience to the familiar business of getting votes. He bribed; he promised; he canvassed every country clergyman who had kept his name on the books. He wrote fawning letters to men of his own rank, begging them to use their influence over their private chaplains and the incumbents and expectants of the livings that were in their gifts. He fetched one

voter out of a madhouse, and another all the way from the Isle of Man; and such was the ill-feeling and confusion he created in University Society that his own cousins who had gone down from London to do what they could for him among their College acquaintances freely expressed their disgust at finding the Cambridge Senate treated like a constituency of pot-wallopers. When the poll closed both sides claimed a majority of one.

The undergraduates, who were for Lord Hardwicke to a man, burst into the Senate House, elected one of their own number High Steward and chaired him as the representative of their favourite; and when in the course of the next month Sandwich dined with the Fellows of Trinity, the students rose from their seats and quitted the Hall in a body, as soon as he had taken his place at the High Table."—*Early History of C. J. Fox* (*Trevelyan*), pp. 81–83.

> "*Too infamous to have a friend,*
> *Too bad for bad men to commend,*
> *Or good to name; beneath whose weight*
> *Earth groans; who hath been spared by fate*
> *Only to show, on Mercy's plan;*
> *How far and long God bears with man.*"
>
> —*Ibid.*, p. 79.

"The Earl of Sandwich was excellent as the chief of a department. He rose about the time his predecessor retired to rest, and remained till what was then a late dinner hour, closely absorbed in methodical and most effectual labour. . . . He shocked even his own generation with the immorality of his private life. . . . Corrupt, tyrannical, and brazen-faced as a politician, and

destitute, as was seen in his conduct to Wilkes, of fidelity to the partners of his secret and pleasant vices."—*Ibid.*, pp. 78, 79.

Vol. II, *p.* 98 : "They chose Sir John Cust, who went through the time honoured farce of self depreciation, and duly submitted to be forced up to the steps of the Chair expostulating with carefully graduated vehemence, which grew fainter as he ascended from the floor. The poor man had more reason for reluctance than he knew of at the time, for a single session of Wilkes killed him."—*Ibid.*, p. 145.

Vol. II, *p.* 145 : "Garrick, as oral tradition relates, was invited to witness some private theatricals at a great country house. After the performance he was anxiously questioned as to the merits of the actors, and seeing that he must say something he gave it as his opinion that the gentleman who played the king seemed quite at home on the stage. It turned out that his praise had been bestowed upon a scene-shifter from his own theatre who had been brought down from London to superintend the mechanical arrangements and had taken the part on an emergency."—*Ibid.*, p. 329.

Vol. II, *p.* 255 : "We then took a little dip into a charming part of Wales about Wrexham, and visited Lady Cunliffe, wife of Sir Foster, *capo di casa* of a very old and worthy family of my acquaintance of very many years. She is an elegant and most pleasing woman; the house is just finished by Wyatt in exquisite taste; as is the furniture."—*Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, vol. iii, p. 247.

Vol. II, p. 255: "Nearly all the riots that took place in large towns at the end of the century were not trade but scarcity riots. In 1800 wheat being at 115.11*d.* the quarter, popular discontent was at its height. It was not only the price of bread that had risen in seven years but the prices of meat, butter, and sugar had doubled."—*Social England* (*Traill*), p. 492.

Vol. II, p. 256: The scarcity of flour necessitated a change of diet. In July 1795 the Privy Council implored all families to abjure pudding and pastry, and declared their own intention to have only fish, meat, vegetables, and household bread made partly of rye. It was then recommended that one quartern loaf per head per week should be a maximum allowance, and the loaf was to be brought on the table for each to help himself that none be wasted. New bread was forbidden to be sold, as stale would go farther, and the scarcity of flour caused powdered heads to go out of fashion.

Vol. II, p. 274: "Mrs. and Miss Crewe and Miss Hayman, who is now Privy Purse to the Princess of Wales, have been attending Walker's astronomical lectures."—*Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, vol. iii, p. 256.

Vol. II, p. 301: "The Duke of Grafton was at once the greatest dispenser of patronage, and the most notorious evil liver in the kingdom. The Chancellorship of Cambridge happened to fall vacant; and the young Prime Minister was selected to preside over a University, which if he had been in statu pupillari, the proctors would soon have made too hot to hold him."—*Early History of C. J. Fox* (*Trevelyan*), p. 83.

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